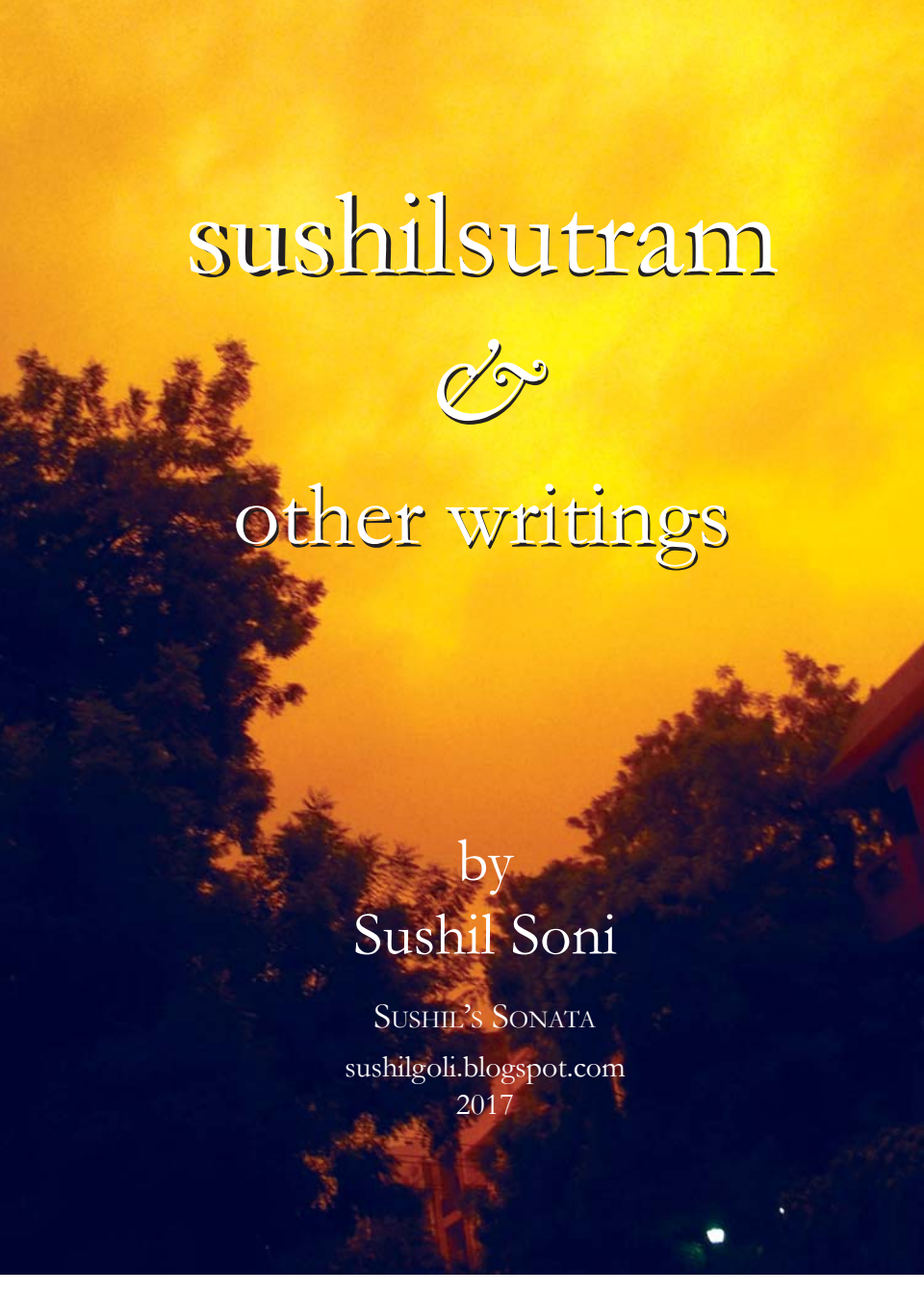




sushilsutram



other writings

by
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1. We are bound by the world we have created.
2. This bondage is the result of our desire to escape from our own selves. Because of this knowledge we are not free.
3. There is a way to recover our freedom.
4. This bondage comes from internal factors like ignorance, lack of understanding, unawareness and forgetfulness.
5. We listen to the great souls, appreciate their sacrifices and teachings, and then continue to live the way we have been. This is because we follow our habits and routines.
6. This bondage comes from our dependence on external factors like technology, education, information and upbringing.
7. The external factors are in the form of educational institutions, media, television, groups, lobbies, advertisements, knowledge filtration, statistics, internet, and so on.
8. We are constantly kept occupied with machines and information so that only technology survives.
9. We have now become obsessed with the instruments of technology and information; and thus forgotten who we are in reality.

10. All these devices have been created so that we remain in a constant state of forgetfulness. By remaining in this state, we ensure that systems work for profits.

11. By remaining in this state, machines have taken over our lives. Machines do not need us, and we cannot live without them.

12. Technology is the new God and we are its slaves.

13. In our effort to keep technology alive, we have become victims of its advancement.

14. By becoming victims and living in forgetfulness, we acquire several forms of internal and external diseases, like stress, high blood pressure, heart diseases, diabetes, depression and so on.

15. After ensuring that we receive various kinds of diseases, technology provides us with remedies in the form of hospitals and medicines.

16. We wrongly identify ourselves as belonging to a developed world.

17. A civilization is not known by how much it has technologically developed, but by how advanced it is in knowledge, awareness, moderation and clear-headedness.

18. Ignorance leads to suffering. Awareness leads to happiness.

19. Irregular relationships, rapes, victimizations, corruptions, murders, and other criminal and violent activities are not the hallmarks of an advanced society.

20. In an advanced society, people live in harmony with each other and their surroundings; and prisons are generally empty and lawyers unoccupied.

21. In an advanced society, members are in reverence of each other and women are not used as pleasure gadgets for individual and group enjoyment.

22. In an advanced society, people follow laws of the land and of nature, they are happy and prosperous. They are learned and knowledgeable and they are physically and mentally pure. They are free from slander, ridicule, back-biting, deceit and are constantly working for the welfare of each other.

23. The earth and the cosmos were created without any selfish motive.

24. It is from the earth and nature that we create objects for our possession.

25. We create a demand for something we do not need. To meet this demand, we exploit earth and nature.

26. Our desire to possess arises either from fear of loss or to display our spending power or because of mental illness.

27. In an advanced society, people live in harmony with nature, the sun, the moon and the rest of the creation. They are aware that the sun shines and the rain falls on earth without any selfish motive.

28. Knowledgeable ones know that that the earth, the sun, the moon, the wind, the rain, the trees and the atmosphere are important for our own survival and should become objects of worship. Ignorance, greed and deceit lead to exploitation and abuse.

29. What is above is also below. The same particles that are moving in the cosmos are also in our bodies and in the trees and the sun and the earth. If we nurture our bodies, we should also nurture the earth and the nature.

30. If what is above is also below, then there is no difference between you and me and the stone that is under my feet.

31. This means that we all are one – what is outside is also inside. Only our ego seeks the difference.

32. This ego forces us to blow our own trumpets.

33. We come to earth, tell others that we have reached our destination, and leave.

34. The fact remains that at the end of our lives we do not reach anywhere. We are still there where we were at the beginning.

35. O God, may You remove ignorance. May knowledge give us happiness.

36. Now, we must remove the factors that lead to our suffering and bondage.

37. Suffering and bondage can be removed by an internal process. Any external process is flawed and useless.

38. Since we are not in harmony with our surroundings, we have lost the rhythm of life.

39. We will be in harmony with our surroundings only when we realize that we are a part of the whole. Having realized that we are a part, we cannot harm another part of the same whole.

40. This realization comes from self-referral.

41. Through self-analysis you can remove the six maladies from your internal system, namely, desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride and jealousy. The presence of these maladies results in mental illnesses and various physical diseases. They also lead to all forms of corruption and violence in society.

42. By practicing self-analysis, you can know your aptitude and talent. You can also remove the curtain of ignorance.

43. Self-analysis can be practiced only in silence and aloneness. You cannot be in contact with yourself when you are occupied

with someone or something. Another condition for practicing self-analysis is being honest with your self.

44. Your mind is always seeking to divert your attention from the task at hand; it will never allow you to settle at one thing or one thought.

45. Your mind is like a knife, very sharp and a dangerous weapon. Do not let it control you.

46. There are several methods for controlling the mind. You must choose the one that suits your temperament.

47. Once you have reined in your mind, it will become your slave. This is your first step towards freedom from bondage.

48. After you have controlled your mind, you will have clear thoughts and a better understanding of your surroundings.

49. Then you will live in harmony with nature.

50. You can now perform your duties towards mankind and nature.

51. Without internal purity evil cannot be eradicated.

52. O God, may our pure deeds and thoughts spread throughout the earth and the entire creation like the light of the sun that brings happiness and removes darkness.

53. Pure men are those who respect their elders, who earn money through honest and proper means, who live with their wives, who bring up their children as protectors of the earth and nature, and who consider the whole world as their family.

54. Pure women are those who like mountains stay at one place, devote themselves to the welfare of their families and continue in the tradition of their mothers.

55. Pure leaders are those who work for the welfare of the society and not for the benefit of their families, friends and colleagues through dishonest means or by keeping silence or by becoming traders of weapons.

56. The greatest sacrifice is to give up selfishness. The greatest achievement is to acquire selflessness.

57. Development of knowledge, inner strength and acquisition of wealth should be the aim of humans. These are acquired through internal means and not through technological advancement.

58. Technology removes us from our surroundings. Internal advancement brings us close to nature and creation. We must strive for the latter.

59. The greatest gift you can give the world is the gift of selfless and pure actions.

60. Without actions, nothing is possible, both inside and outside. Not even for a moment can anything, living or non-living, stay without action.

61. Actions lead to enhancement, inertia leads to deterioration.

62. The ultimate truth that can be realized only through constant practice of self-analysis.

63. This is Self-Realization, this is Enlightenment that the great souls have spoken of.

64. This cannot be gained from training, nor from schooling nor by any other external methods but by internal process spoken of earlier.

65. Eating pure food, drinking pure water, thinking pure thoughts and keeping your body and mind pure are aids to reach this state.

66. Once you are totally pure internally, your surroundings will also become pure. Purity attracts purity.

67. When you and your surroundings become pure, then creation will once again regain its pristine glory.

End of sushilsutram

ARE HUMANS POISED FOR ANOTHER LEAP?

Humans have taken leaps in the past that have catapulted them from one level to another. But this leap was never an evolutionary process because evolution never happens.

The discovery that humans could make fire, just like nature did, was a giant leap. Here was the power of nature in human hands, which he could utilize for both good and evil purposes. Humans all over the earth were making fires simultaneously.

Language also came in a single leap that allowed humans to express complex meanings through combination of sounds. Humans all over the world were communicating simultaneously.

Invention of wheel gave humans another powerful tool with which they could explore the earth. They were all travelling and communicating simultaneously.

Another leap happened when pyramids were erected all over the world. They all happened together.

Civilizations happened all over the earth in another leap. They occurred simultaneously. We have failed to establish which ones came first since the dating system itself is flawed and may have been devised to show superiority of one race over another. Even today, we are stumbling upon old civilizations.

These civilizations may have perished simultaneously.

Industrial Revolution did not occur at one spot but the whole world participated in it. Historians say that without India, Industrial Revolution may not have even taken place. So, here too, in this leap, all humans were involved.

Both the World Wars started in Europe and the whole world was involved. These unfortunate wars led to the formation of nations as we know them now.

What we see here is interconnectedness, an invisible string that binds us all. Since 2003, we humans had been waiting for 2012 to happen. And it did happen, though not as alarmingly as some of us portrayed. That 2012 is still going on and is not over yet.

All these have happened because of our Collective Will. Our minds are intensely connected – from making of fire to the World Wars, our Collective Mind, perhaps, all willed these leaps.

It seems we are poised for another Leap.

THE CHANDIAN EFFECT

Faqir Chand (1886-1981), fondly called Baba Faqir Chand, had a large and devoted following in Punjab state of north India. When he began to initiate disciples, something strange happened. His devotees began seeing his form appear while meditating. Others said that this was caused by the blessed food that the Baba gave them. However, Faqir Chand said that he had no knowledge about this phenomenon.

He wrote: “People say that my form manifests to them and helps them in solving their worldly as well as mental problems, but I did not go anywhere, nor do I know about such miraculous instances” (The Essence of the Truth).

He asked himself: “What about the visions that appear to me? Are they a creation of my own mind, and does my guru also not know about his appearances to me?” Faqir Chand said he realized the truth only after he asked this question. So, he wrote: “All manifestations, visions, and forms that are seen within are mental (illusory) creations” (The Secret of Secrets).

David Christopher Lane, Ph.D., who interviewed Faqir Chand, called this phenomenon “Chandian Effect”, so named because Faqir Chand was the first guru to speak at length about visionary manifestations. Dr Lane designates two major factors in these encounters: “1) the overwhelming experience of certainty which

accompanies religious ecstasies; and 2) the subjective projection of sacred forms/figures/scenes by a meditator/devotee without the conscious knowledge of the object/person who is beheld as the centre of the experience”.

Sri Ramana Maharshi, when asked about Jesus’ power to perform miracles, said something what Faqir Chand had taught – Was Jesus aware that he was curing men of their diseases? “Such manifestations are as real as your own reality. In other words, when you identify with the body, you are gross objects; when in subtle body or in mental plane as in dream, you see objects equally subtle; in absence of identification as in deep sleep, you see nothing. The objects seen bear relation to the state of the seer. The same applies to visions of God” (Talk with Sri Ramana Maharshi).

So, it follows that in Chandian Effect, the visions or manifestations seen are not of factual but amalgamation of learnt experiences and subjective effects on the learning. No wonder then Catholics will see Virgin Mary and not Lord Buddha, Hindus will see Lord Shiva and not Moses.

It is apparent from above that Faqir Chand was not aware of his miraculous powers. Does it mean that all gurus likewise are ignorant about their healing gifts, etc?

Jesus asked the crowd that followed him: “Who touched me?” Then a woman suffering from flow of blood came up, and by a brief touch from Jesus was cured. At this Jesus said, “Daughter, your faith has made you well” (Saint Mark).

A year after his first meeting with Sri Ramana Maharshi, Ganapati Muni, while meditating in a temple at Tiruvottiyur, felt distracted and longed for the guidance of his guru. At that moment Sri Ramana Maharshi appeared before him in a remarkable outflow of grace. Year later, Sri Ramana Maharshi hinting at this incident, said: “While the body thus descended to the ground it occurred to me that I was at Tiruvottiyur”.

While the Chandian Effect covers almost all transpersonal visions, the experience of bilocation in Sri Ramana Maharshi's case may warrant further investigation since the “unknowing” hypothesis present by Faqir Chand applies to a majority of cases. Though these visions are seen as projections of one's own minds, they cannot be subjected to “reality check”. As Dr Lane says, “the object of devotion in these transpersonal encounters, are, for the most part, not aware of their role”.

Human life is meaningless without purpose. Actions can only be directed if there is purpose. Similarly, in a society if there is no purpose, the society moves without direction. For purushartha to happen in a society, a purpose has to be given.

This is the Dharma, the Rit or the eternal law which needs to be learnt from Prakriti.

LET'S CHASE AWAY PERCEPTIONS OF RACE

Are our inferences based upon race? Do we as individuals remember other individuals as racial stereotypes? Is it possible not to notice an individual's race? By the way, what is the meaning of race and why did this concept arise and get accepted?

But if tell anyone that humanity is not divided into racial types, then he will look at your face with a sneer.

Consider the following:

1/. Race does not exist outside the human minds.

2/. Geneticists have discovered that there are no genetic variations in human species to differentiate races. In fact, the genetic distances for protein loci between Europeans, Asians and sub-Saharan African populations are "of same order of magnitude as those for local populations in other organisms and considerably smaller than those for subspecies". ("Genetic relationship and evolution of human races", A Roychoudhury & M Nei, 1982).

3/. Among chimpanzees, the diversity of gene sequences is four times higher than for humans ("Extensive nuclear DNA

sequence diversity among chimpanzees”, H Kaessmann, et al, 1999).

So, if a biologist or a politician wants to apply the concept of “races” to humans, then be sure that humans do not qualify.

The concept of race emerged from Europe (where else?). Herodotus gave physical descriptions of people in his “Historie”. Pliny the Elder explained physical differences between Europeans and Africans. During the Renaissance, classifications of humans based on physical differences assumed great importance – choleric, sanguine, phlegmatic and melancholy.

Then the racial paradigm was thoroughly chiseled, shaped and clothed with scientific temper. Western societies justified slavery, colonialism and discrimination according to races – this continued till the infamous Apartheid regime in South Africa. These societies were often taking garb of “scientific hypothesis” for moral justification for their immoral behaviours. Many attempts were made to state biological differences to establish superiority of a particular race. Lidio Cipriani (1892-1962) wrote this nonsense before fascist Italy attacked Ethiopia:

“Within negroes races, mental inferiority in women is very close to mental deficiency; moreover, at least in Africa, some female behaviours are not human, and resemble animal behaviours...very clever Caucasian men show an increase in

the brain volume and a different morphology, mainly in the temporal lobe, than other populations.”

It was only for these reasons, especially as demonstrated by Cipriani above (who later became more cautious) that a series of researches were undertaken to dismantle popular racist ideologies from 1950s onwards till man began to sequence the genes.

The unscientific concept of race lost consensus during the 1980s but the controversy over racial paradigm is not yet over. In United States alone, a survey was carried out in 1985 that demonstrated that half of the physical anthropologists agreed that races existed. After the molecular anthropology rejected the 17th century European concept of race, somehow a new phrase “human race” rather than “human species” has crept up in scientific journals.

Now, with greater integration of human beings all over the world, thanks to the advancement of transportations and alliances, coalitions as well as shared living, the human species is once again moving towards Oneness.

The only one thing that is preventing this one humanity from total Oneness, or rather keeping it in compartments, is organized religion and its fundamental derivatives which too are simply mental projections, far, far removed from the reality of living.

SHALL WE KICK THE CALENDAR?

All ancient calendars were of 360 days, consisting of 12 months of 30 days each. The Babylonians, the Assyrians, the Hindus, the ancient Persians, the Egyptians, the Romans, the South Americans and the Chinese – all followed the calendars of 360 days for repeated sowing and harvesting. This calendar was based on the rotation of the earth around the sun. Some civilizations followed lunisolar calendars which had the system of “Intercalcation” or an additional 30 days lunar month.

Then something happened and five days were added to 360 days. According to Immanuel Velikovsky, in his book “Worlds in Collision”, he has written that these five days were added sometimes in the 7th century BC. According to him, a series of catastrophes occurred that changed the axis and orbit of both the earth and the moon. The moon recedes to an orbit of less than 30 days to 29 and a half days. At the same time, the orbit of the earth changed to 365.3 days.

Till 1800 BC, Babylonians were using lunar calendar but during Nebuchadnezzar II, they stopped looking at the crescent moon and adopted the 365 days calendar. Yet, it was divided into 12 months with five extra days added at the end of the year.

The Egyptians devised their calendar based on based upon the appearance of Sirius to its original positions which happened

to be after 365 days. Yet, it was divided into 12 months with 30 days each.

The Hebrews followed the crescent Moon but added the 13th month every so often. Yet, it was divided into 12 months of 30 days.

The Romans too, before Julius Caesar, followed the lunar calendar. Yet, it was divided into 12 months with 30 days each.

Now, let's consider the following:

1/. For every once the Earth goes around the Sun, the Moon goes around the Earth 13 times.

2/. Right up to the 20th century, all pre-agricultural humans have followed Moon calendar.

3/. Actually the problem is with the so-called scientific thinking of a human “man”. The 13th Moon was always a problem for his “logical” thinking. There was always a 13th Moon which transited from one solar year to the next solar year. If the solar year was of 365.242 days, the 12 lunations were 354.367 days, with the thirteenth amounting to 383.5 days, a difference of 18.25 days more than solar days.

4/. Civilized “woman” never had a problem with lunar cycles. They always had this natural rhythm with nature and natural

cycles. The menstrual cycle of 28 days is actually the mean between 29.5 days of moon cycle seen from earth (synodic) and 27.5 days of other lunation cycle.

5/. Everyone in olden times – Babylonians, Egyptians, Indian, Chinese – divided the 360 degree circle into twelve parts of 30 degrees each. So, the calendars were based on twelve months of 30 days yield.

8/. Even today Hindus, Islamic, Chinese, Jews follow lunar based dates for their festivals and rituals and depend on Gregorian calendar for economic and political affairs.

9/. The illogical nature of the Gregorian calendar divides 365.242 days into 12 uneven months – four months of 30 days, seven of 31 days and one of 28 days and giving an extra day every four years.

10/. Far more logical and easier way is to divide the solar years into 13 equal months of 28 days with an extra day free.

Physicist Mark Comings states: “The 12-month calendar has a cycle that is contrary to and out of phase with the natural annual 13-fold gravitational wave created by the Moon’s orbit around the Sun”.

This solar calendar has arisen from the flat perception of time or rather the linear perception of time which says that time

flies like an arrow. This shows that 12 months corresponds to 12 hour-60 minute clock or 12:60 frequency. Or maybe, the No.13 was a taboo, something to be afraid of. It will not be out of place to point out here that the stress of linear time contributes to physical deterioration and disease.

“The simple and easiest way to re-programme your daily awareness of the actual nature of time is to follow the 13 Moon Calendar”, according to Dr Jose Arguelles, Ph.D.

ENTERING THE NEW CYCLE

The Sun, along with its system, revolves around its binary in about 24,000 years of our earth. It also revolves around the grand centre called in Hindu scriptures as Vishnunabhi or the Navel of Lord Vishnu, which coincidentally happens to be the centre of the galaxy where the Black Hole exists. During this revolution, the sun goes towards the centre (Ascending) taking 12,000 years to do so and then moves away from the centre (Descending), taking another 12,000 years of earth to reach the farther point from the centre. When it is moving towards the centre, there is mental development. When it is moving away from the centre, then there is intellectual decline. Many other ancient cultures, like the Greeks, the Zoroastrians, also believed in the 12,000 year cycle.

Sri Yukteshwar, a 19th century Hindu monk, wrote on this: “Each of these periods of 12,000 years brings complete change, both externally in the material world, and internally in the intellectual or electric world, and is called one of the Divine Yugas or Electric Couple.”

This 24,000 year of Ascending and Descending cycle approximates the 25,765 Precessional Years when the sun moves backwards in the 12 zodiacal constellations. An ancient book of astronomy “Surya Siddhanta” specifies the value of 54

arc second per year for precession and not 50 arc second, which calculated comes to 24,000 years.

Rather than following complicated calculations which crept into these yugas later on, it is best to follow the original Saptrishi Calendar or the calendar based on the Great Bear Constellation which was followed in ancient India. According to this calendar the Great Bear stayed in one constellation for 100 years, thus adding up to 2,700 years for 27 constellations. However, 12,000 years were equally divided into four Yugas or Ages with each yuga getting 3,000 years: Satya Yuga (Golden Age), Treta Yuga (Silver Age), Dwapar Yuga (Bronze Age) and Kali Yuga (Iron Age), with the Transition or Mutation period of 300 years each.

It has been established by several scholars through the historical accounts in Mahabharata and visits of the Greeks travelers etc to India, that the Saptrishi Calendar started in 6676 BCE. Moreover, since Mahabharata describes events happening in Dwapara Yuga, it has been established that 6676 BCE marks the beginning of Descending Dwapara Yuga. According to this calculation, we are in the Ascending Kali Yuga (676 BCE to 2025 CE). Now, the Transitional Period of 300 years starts from 2025 CE and ends in 2325CE before the next yuga starts.

What is important here is the Transitional Period. Calculations indicate that in the past Transitional Periods, Sri Yukteshwar's

“complete change” indeed took place. Scholars have linked in this way:

Consider Transitional or Mutation Period preceeding Ascending Kali Yuga, 300 years back from 676 BCE – Troy was destroyed, the great Mycenaean cities collapsed, “Third Intermediate Period” of Egypt happened, Indus Valley Civilisation ended, and Hekla volcano eruption.

Go back 3,000 years and we reach the Mutation Period of 3976 BCE-3676 BCE – referred to in geology as 5.9 kilo year event, i.e. intense aridification; Sahara desert; Jewish Calendar says world began in 3761 BC, severe floodings in Asia or the Flandrian transgression.

The Transitional Period before the above is 6976 BCE – 6676 BCE – geologists say the Black Sea Catastrophe happened during this time when Mediterranean Sea swelled with melting ice and flooded great parts of Europe; gigantic earthquakes in Europe including “rock tsumanis” in Sweden.

During the earlier Transitional Period of 9976 BCE – 9676 BCE – Ice Age ended; Global Flooding in 9600 BCE and all the extinctions that followed.

Now, for earth changes to take place, it may take a jiffy or even hundreds of years. There are no hard and fast rules in Nature but yet there are cycles. As the next Transitional Period of 300

years starting 2025 CE is approaching, there are indications that the changes might already be underway. According to Mayan Long Calendar calculations, this “Great Cycle” ended in 2012 for a new one to begin. This date of 2012 assumes importance since in this year, we began to see and record earth changes – increased volcanic eruptions, sink holes, increased earthquakes, increased floodings, increased cracking of the earth because of earth swelling – all this triggered by the increased activity of the Sun.

If the above cyclic changes are correct, then these activities are expected to increase and reach their peak by 2025 CE, i.e. 12 years from now.

Now then, we are according to these calculations in the Ascending Cycle. So, we would rather witness increased mental activity, more knowledge, more intelligence, greater awakening.

WHAT IS THERE IS ALSO HERE

From the years 2000 to 2003, nuclear scientists at the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider near New York repeatedly smashed the nuclei of gold atoms together with such force that their energy briefly generated trillion degree temperatures. They think that this is the temperature which was reached during the first few seconds of the creation of the universe. However, what they actually discovered was much more exciting. Their find has thoroughly rejected the much-hyped theory that the earliest moments of creation generated fiery gases. The tests in this collider have shown that everything was so hot at that time that particles like quarks and gluons moved around in the same way that a crushed onion would do in a kitchen blender. In other words, these particles don't fly away but squirt out in streams, which show that in the first microseconds of existence, matter was actually in a liquid state and not made of fiery gases.

In the creation hymn or Nasadiya Sukta of Rig Veda, these cosmic waters or ocean is described like this: "At first there was only darkness wrapped in darkness. All this was unilluminated water."

Floating on this cosmic ocean, resting on the great snake, Anant, is Lord Narayana or Vishnu. The actual meaning of Narayana is One who rests on Liquid. From the lotus flower that emerged

from His navel, Lord Brahma is born. This cosmic ocean is the Unified Field that gives rise to all matter. DNA is the first biological expression of this Unified Field. It is the intelligence in this DNA that guides a cell to develop and perform the different functions. It is interesting to note that there are different cells for different organs, like liver cells are not similar to heart cells. All cells are ultimately derived from a stem cell – the same stem which is beneath the lotus flower and into which Lord Brahma went – which is itself a field of infinite possibilities. Because of the presence of DNA and the functions that the cells perform in different organs, they are filled with information and even convey this information from one place to another, we can safely say that they are not the material components having physical essence but have biological intelligence. They are flowering from the gene sequence of the DNA that in fact programmes you. If all the cells are not material components, then your body is also not material object but a biological intelligence. Then you are a nothingness in progress. You are also not a material nothingness. You actually are a nothingness of information, consciousness in motion, a wave function. That is what you are. A jiva or individual soul who is a mirror of the universal soul or Brahman. Ayurveda says that man is the epitome of the universe. If you know man then you know the universe.

This cosmic ocean contains 14 lokas or celestial systems, out of which seven are lower or belonging to outer cosmos and

the remaining are higher lokas or belonging to inner cosmos. The seven other lokas are lower lokas as follows: atala, vitala, sutala, talala, mahatala, rastala and patala. This is the outer cosmos. The higher lokas are as follows: bhuloka situated in the feet, bhuvarloka situated in the genitals, svargaloka situated in the navel, maharloka situated in the heart, janaloka situated in the throat, tapoloka situated in the brow centre and satyaloka situated above the head. These correspond to the seven chakras that reside in our astral body. Similarly, the 33 primary devatas also reside in our body and perform functions, like Vayu in the nostrils performing the function of respiration and Surya in the eyes performing the function of sight. These devatas are living forces or reside in our body in their subtle forms. This is the inner cosmos. This inner cosmos is constantly observing the outer cosmos. It sees material things, it has material thoughts and feelings, it eats, performs outer functions and tries to understand what it sees and feels and why it does what it does. Vedas have taught us that the body is the earth, breath is the space and consciousness is the sun. Therefore, each god and goddess were given 108 names and the rosary or mala has 108 beads so that you take a spiritual journey by repeating a mantra 108 times, traveling from outside to within. This is the kind of connection that our body has with the outer cosmos, apart from flowing with the rhythms of nature.

We are dealing here with physical nature of existence. However, quantum mechanics has shown that when you go deeper into

the nature of physical existence or matter, we move away from the physical shell and discover that every particle is just a wave, an excitation of an underlying field. If we go even deeper, then we reach a Zero Point Field which is self-interactive. It is creating vibrations and particles out of itself. It is reabsorbing them back into itself.

This is the source of energy and matter. This is the field of pure being which is constantly in the state of becoming. Being is the observable nature of existence; becoming is the field of consciousness, the Unified Field, the cosmic ocean that has the material support in particles so that it remains aware of itself. This is the ultimate substance of all substances.

In the human body, consciousness resides in the material substance but it does not have a specific location. It is not in the brain or in any other organ in the body as consciousness is not a physical reality and cannot be studied directly. We know that machines cannot think, we also know that different states like wakefulness, dream and coma have neurochemical signals. Then where does this perceiving self reside? Our idea of the cosmos, i.e. physical cosmos is based on our perceiving and thinking or brain and mind. The outer is mirrored in the inner. So, the simple answer to this problem lies in what the Vedas have taught us so diligently: what is outside is inside. In other words, there is only one consciousness. This whole universe is the manifestation of pure, infinite and eternal consciousness.

Isha Upanishad opens with this fascinating sentence: “All this, whatever exists in this changing universe, should be covered by the Lord”. It means that God is enveloping all things. It is in our seeing that we exist separately from that One Consciousness. When we become observers, we separate ourselves from the observed. The seer and the seen must meet, must become one to know reality. Physicists insist that to know the universe and its manifestation, the universe needs to have an observer. We as observers can collect all the information stored in the physical reality of the universe. But we cannot observe how it works, we cannot know why it works, or even why it is there because we cannot observe these happening in front of us or even recorded by the best of the machines that we have created.

To understand the consciousness of the universe, we need to become one with it. Everything in reality is an expression of consciousness. A subtle movement in the cosmic ocean stirred Lord Vishnu to wakefulness and the process of creation began. Ever since, consciousness has been expanding not in the straight direction that an arrow takes but in different ways and directions. The several universes are expanding in different directions and this evolution is taking place at all levels. That is consciousness at work. Lord Krishna tells Arjun that the wise see God in all things and all things in God. He alone is the reality, everything else is maya or unreal. We exist in Him and He exists in us. Yatha pinde, tatha brahmade. HARI OM.

FROM THE VEDAS

“The greatest donation is that of knowledge. Nobody can steal this knowledge nor can it be destroyed. This knowledge keeps on increasing and gives permanent happiness to everyone. You can obtain this knowledge from a brahmchari.

- Rig Veda, VI,28,3.

The duty of a learned and wise person is to show the Truth with the Torch of Knowledge. Money, clothes and food give temporary satisfaction and their influence is momentary. Money is always in motion as its nature is to move from one place to another; clothes have the tendency to get worn out and wither away; food is eaten and digested. All these are impermanent. Only knowledge that shows the Truth is permanent. This is the wealth that keeps on increasing, this is the piece of cloth that never gets worn out, this is the food that never finishes. Donate or impart knowledge without material gains, without any commercial agendas. Knowledge thus donated is of the highest form.

Who is qualified to donate such knowledge? A person who lives a pure life in conduct, who has control over senses, who mingles with like-minded people and who performs right actions. Such a wise person can increase purity and happiness in the world.

SANSKRIT, THE LANGUAGE OF THE GODS

The beating of the Damaru (drum) by Lord Shiva produced the very first sound or nada. Nada is the source of creation. This first sound was made in nothingness or the void. To the rhythm of this divine sound, Lord Shiva Himself began the ecstatic dance in the Nataraja form. At the end of the Cosmic Dance, He played the Daramu holding it in His Divine Hand, fourteen times.

From these fourteen sounds evolved the fourteen sutras, which encompass the phonetics of Sanskrit language. Based on these fourteen sutras, sage Panini composed his grammar called Ashtadhyayi. Thus, it was re-established that the science of Sanskrit grammar existed eternally.

As the process of creation began, so did the process of language and Sanskrit sounds emerged alongside. Since creation is perfect and complete in itself, so is Sanskrit – sam means perfectly or wholly and krit means done – i.e. which is perfectly or wholly done. This perfect language was initially introduced by Brahma to the celestial sages and thus, it is called deva vani or the sacred language. This language was called deva vani also because it was the perfect medium to express godlike thoughts as well as profound spiritual subtleties and philosophical distinctions. Now, since Sanskrit emerged along with creation, then it becomes the mother of all languages, i.e. it became the origin

of other languages on planet earth just like India was the origin of other civilizations across the globe.

Written in devanagari script, Sanskrit language was once held so sacred that the Brahmins were not even allowed to mention it to profane ears – only the dwija or twice-born were permitted to use this sacred language. Being phonetic in character, Devanagari was meant for communication between gods and the initiated mortals. That is the reason why so much silence was maintained during the Vedic and Brahmanical periods about anything that was concerned with Sanskrit language. It was the language of the gods and therefore it was devanagari, or divine city writing.

This language is so perfect that to say that it has lost its importance today would not be correct. This universal language is not a dead language, it is only that it is not universally spoken. There was a time when this language became a preserve of the Brahmins only when the Mughals and British ruled India and forcefully imposed imperfect and incomplete languages like Urdu and English. To say that it is a “dead tongue” could be slightly speaking the truth since now in today’s India, Sanskrit is not spoken commonly with English language having taken its roots. However, in the reign of immutable cyclic laws, Sanskrit, which we all thought had come to be nearly lost to the world, is gradually and intensely returning to its glory. It is

seeing its expansion in Europe and America with several institutes there opening up Sanskrit academies to teach the language and our holy books.

It is to be noted that both the phonology, or the speech sound, as well as the morphology or science of word formation of the Sanskrit language, are unique. The features that make the language unique include the 36 consonants and 16 vowels which have never been modified since the beginning. Compared to other languages, especially English which has seen remarkable growth in the last several centuries, Sanskrit, being absolutely perfect by its own nature, has not been modified; no sound shift ever took place and no additions were made in the grammar. Regarding morphology, Panini states in his Ashtadhyayi that a word is formed from a root in a precise order which has not changed and any desired number of words can be created. Secondly, compared to other languages, Sanskrit has not witnessed any changes in the grammar and has existed in its perfect form since the beginning even before the world knew of Latin or Greek. Lastly, there is only one language on planet earth from which words in other languages have arisen. These are apbhransh of the original Sanskrit, like matri giving rise to mater or mother.

There is a mathematical precision about this language, which probably no other language on this planet has.

Moreover, no consonant can be pronounced without a vowel which makes the sound shift almost impossible because modification is allowed to form the word and not more. Here, vowel is the shakti which brings the otherwise nonactive consonant into action. Without Shakti, there is inactivity in Shiva.

What we have noticed here is that everything is defined. Consonants, vowels, roots or dhatus are defined. Dhatus are broken down to the most basic level and the structure here is such that no modifications can be made. Even the pronunciation is defined with vowels and consonants specifically arranged to the specificity of their pronunciation. That makes Sanskrit a natural language from the human point of view.

While the Rig Veda does not say anything about the language which was spoken during Vedic times, the oldest extant example of the literature of the Vedic period is itself RigVeda which is written in verse and happens to be the oldest preserved form of Sanskrit. Later, grammarians researched and established that Sanskrit language had actually achieved mathematical perfection. In fact, grammar was derived from what had already been written long, long ago. Based on these findings we can say that Sanskrit grammar was an attempt to explain a spoken language.

Even NASA corroborates this by saying that analysis of Sanskrit grammar “probably has to do with an age-old Indo-Aryan preoccupation to discover the nature of reality behind the impressions we human beings receive through the operation of our senses”.

In India, the hunger to discover truth has always been so consuming. A perfect tool was required for the discovery of truth. And this tool our ancients found in the Sanskrit language. Without word, without language, truth cannot be known. Human mind needs to define, describe and explain the complexities of life and beyond. For this purpose, language is required. The perfection of creation, the fullness of Prakriti cannot be known and appreciated without the help of speech; and speech needs words to communicate. Like mathematics, a language of precision, which has helped discover interrelationships of energy and matter, a language of precision, Sanskrit, helped us in discovering interrelationship of man with Prakriti or Nature.

Our relationship with Nature only happens with the medium of a language. With language we are also able to communicate our feelings and appreciation of nature. Vedas are filled with mantras appreciating the Prakriti and our presence in it. They even invoke the gods in heavens to come to earth and assist us in living with prakriti. Our ancients found that there was

something pious, some purity in prakriti because it was always giving without ever asking. So, they developed a system where they could return their obligations and this system was called yagya. Through yagya and the agni, they performed various rituals to worship all that was around them – the cosmos, the heavens, the gods, the dawn, the sun, the trees, the wind, the rains. Everything that was created was worthy of worship. These rituals were performed through the language of Sanskrit. In this way, Sanskrit itself became the language of the gods. It is also the language used to discover the sacredness, purity and spirituality of life.

In fact, it is through Sanskrit alone that humans are able to accomplish real purpose in life: to wake up and find out who we are. While we are unconsciously programmed by a language to maintain our survival pattern established by previous karmas, consciously we can use the language as an instrument for realization. Sanskrit happens to be the only language on this planet that is capable of providing such a platform. Sanskrit sounds, sung in a rhythmic sequence, opens up a whole new dimension inside of human beings.

However, most of the time, we humans beings have an overriding preoccupation with trying to get the language right. This is not a conscious approach but this exercise normally ends up in falseness of the conclusions because the emphasis

is more on the structure of the sentence than on the message conveyed. “Getting it right” sets the language into a survival mode and poses the gifted opportunity of playing with sounds and having a good time. If the language is given a test of survival, then problems begin to occur in that the person writing the sentence tends to equate himself to what is being said in the sentence, like if I get the sentence right, then I am brilliant or vice versa. In this case, this language, which is on a survival nature, is steeped in avidya.

Avidya is identification with happiness when it is actually suffering, identification with purity when it is actually impurity and identification with permanence when it actually is impermanent.

There is a quality of impermanence in survival. Languages which are trying to compete always remain in a state of survival. This means they are still in a state of imperfection. In this way, the user of that language is in a state of self-judgement. In such a condition, that language cannot be regarded as sacred.

Since it is “T” who is using the language, the best test for finding if the language is sacred is the usage of the word “T”. In Sanskrit it is aham, the first sound of the Sanskrit alphabet. “A” comes before any sound is articulated. “HA”, being the last letter of the alphabet is moved by the power of breath. “M” is the last sound produced in the mouth because the lips are shut. So,

AHAM becomes the beginning, the breath of life as well as the end. When AHAM is repeated again and again, it becomes a mantra, an ultimate expression of the Self.

It is in the nature of Sanskrit to elevate human consciousness to sublime heights. Being the language of mantras, Sanskrit has the power to attune us to the matrix of creation. The sounds in a mantra are so inherently pure, harmoniously blended, refreshing and pure that each mantra becomes a flawless gem endowed with divine qualities to cure.

Each of the 49 basic sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet is unique in its location of resonance and tongue position. It can be said without doubt that the grammarians before Panini codified Sanskrit may have worked out the complete alphabet on phonetic principles. Each alphabet is scientifically arranged; the simple vowels coming first and then the complex vowels, followed lastly by consonants arranged in alignment with the order of speech. The pattern is unique. It allows us to focus on the qualities and patterns of articulated sounds that no other language does. By Sanskrit recitation, one automatically focuses on the degree of resonance and on breath, and thereby, one gets direct experience of the sound. This has a therapeutic effect on the mind of the listener or the reader, giving him clarity and joy, because the language has an inherent logic, a systematic presentation and use of pure sounds.

Therefore, Sanskrit and computers are both precise. NASA researchers have been looking at Sanskrit as a possible language because the language leaves little room for error. Backus-Naur Form (BNF) of grammar is a notation technique used in computing and other programming techniques. These, NASA researchers say, are similar to Panini's Ashtadhyayi.

Since Sanskrit language has been the backbone of Indian thought and culture and literature, it is a wonder why the language has not been in the forefront today. A perfect language should not be pushed to the background. Already, foreign countries have begun to realize the greatness of Sanskrit but we in India are still not waking up to this realization. But that does not mean that Sanskrit did not witness eminent scholars who are torch-bearers of Sanskrit learning.

Sanskrit language is not a dead language. It is only one language which has lived continuously for several thousand years without seeing any changes in its grammar or structures unlike other languages of the world. A divine language cannot be a classical language. A divine language is a living language because it is complete in itself.

All life eventually merges into the divine that is complete, whole and infinite. It is our great fortune that Sanskrit has given us a wonderful word called 'satsang'. It means a group of people

who have come together to ascertain reality. For satsang AHAM is more important than language.

In satsang comes non-attachment, in non-attachment comes a state which is beyond confusion, beyond confusion is motionlessness, and beyond that is freedom.

The words of Sanskrit emit sound vibrations which are pure energy. Chanting of mantras in a satsang are simply chanting of pure basic sound combinations in rhythmic sequences that can access the natural computer efficiency of the mind, providing a proper shift from being in the realm of the language to realm of the source of the language. In satsang, a person has in some way decided, consciously or unconsciously, to use this sacred language for which the language was designed – to set himself free. Such is the perfection of Sanskrit language, which is both ancient and eternal, ever present.

THE SAGE

Everything about the sage is sacred. His eyes, his speech, his smile, his walk, his intentions – the very being of the sage is sacred. Luckily for us, the wholesome land of India, and especially the purity of the Himalayas, have been augmented and enhanced by the sacredness of the sages for many generations for the last ten thousand years – continuously being consecrated by the footsteps of the sages.

These sages have, in their quest for Truth, imparted a sense of comprehensive vision to the mortals; given them an awareness which they generously shared. They have, in their unique ways, expanded human knowledge and consciousness, and thus, attempted to alleviate human suffering. Luckily for us, sages are not people who lived in the past, or in the books and scriptures. Even today, they walk the earth, here and now.

These sages are pure souls who confer upon other human beings the transcendental eyes to see the Infinite and to realize the Nature of Reality. These sages are pure souls because they combine knowledge with wisdom, since without wisdom knowledge can become harmful. In other words, a lack of wisdom can make the power of knowledge move in the wrong direction.

Scientists in the world are taught to preoccupy themselves in a single part of the whole. Science classifies. But nature is holistic. Alan Watts in “Nature: Man and Woman”, writes: “Whereas formal scientific knowledge is departmentalized, the world is not, so that the mastery of a single department of knowledge is often as frustrating as a closetful of left shoes”. To remove this frustration has been the sole purpose of the sages. They imparted a kind of education where they emphasized the importance of being completely free and yet highly disciplined without compromise. This puts a tremendous responsibility on the sage.

And what of a sage? A sage ought to be generous, sharing what he knows with his disciples and still remaining richer. A sage provides his disciple a tiger of wisdom on which to ride and himself goes back with what he had at the beginning. Which means that wisdom can be taught. Bertrand Russell asked this question: “If it can, should the teaching of it be one of the aims of education? I should answer both these questions in the affirmative.” HARI OM.

KNOWING REALITY

Suppose you were to examine a table in front of you. When looked from above, you see a flat tabletop. Looked from beneath, you see a tabletop supported by four legs. Get close to the table and you see that the legs are joined to the top and with each other. Move to its one side, you will see that the table is long. Walk up to the next edge, and you see that the table is narrow on the other side. What is happening is that from different angles of vision you are seeing different visuals of the same table. Tap your knuckle on the table and you know what material the table is made of. These perceived appearances give you a mental picture of the table. But they are different appearances of the same object, which we may safely call the ‘reality’ of the table.

But is that the ‘reality’ of the table? Bring the table under the microscope and soon you view holes and irregularities in it. Look more closely and you’ll see molecules and atoms vibrating. What earlier appeared to be a three dimensional fixed object has lost its solidity and is now simply a sum of particles in empty space. Go closer still and you’ll reach a level where you see only quanta, where energy occurs at two different levels: as particle and as wave.

So, there are no boundaries, no definite objects located in definite place. Here, there is variation and there is tremendous

uncertainty because you do not know where and how the energy will appear the next moment. Having lost its solidity, this table becomes a phenomenon occurring in space-time. In essence, the table is empty. The essence of everything is emptiness.

What is emptiness? To understand this, we must take another example. Examine a cup. When we say the cup is empty we mean that there is nothing in the cup. But is it really so? The cup is still full of air. So, it is not empty. To state that the cup is empty we must say empty of what? Therefore, from the physical point of view, the cup always contains something. Yet, the cup is always empty. Here, emptiness is different from the physical meaning. The cup is always empty because it does not have any inherent existence. It does not have an independent existence which cuts it off from other objects. Does that mean that the cup does not exist? No, the cup's existence depends on external circumstances, out of which one single most circumstance is the observer.

The cup's existence depends upon your seeing it. Therefore, it exists relative to you. Does that mean that the cup does not exist if you do not observe it? No, the cup still exists but it has not 'arisen' into existence. There are several forms of dimensions, several forms of energy levels in this creation that exist but we do not see them because of our limited vision. An object can be an inherently existing entity only if it does not

change and by definition does not 'arise'. Here, we are confronted with the problem of origination which is dependent upon the observer; so, this object happens to be an illusory phenomenon. This object is neither permanent nor does it go into extinction. It does not come to our sight nor does it go out of sight on its own. Moreover, this object is neither one thing nor different things as we have seen in the case of our perceptions of the table above. It is there because we are experiencing it.

When we were examining the table, we were experiencing it as an object with our senses and not as a phenomenon, and thus it was a finite object for us to which we could identify as a 'table' with all its attributes, including wood, texture, legs, colour and its usefulness. If we remove the table from our eyes, the memory of the table will remain for a short while, yet it will eventually cease. This means that the experience of the table itself has no inherent existence because our mind is dependent upon the table to experience it. However, we can recall this experience any moment that we desire to and all the associations of the table will come back to us. This self-reference is a direct mental activity which is not dependent upon external, immediate factors. For example we can think of a thought, from which arise subject, perceiver and an object. Now, the mind normally tends to perceive the subject, the perceiver and the object as separate because it tends to attribute an owner to

the thought. This owner is the ego which dwells in illusion that it is the owner and what it is observing is the reality. However, what it is seeing is nothing but false projection of cosmic illusion or maya as we have seen in our experiments with the table and the cup above.

This realization is known to the Self or the atma, the centre of consciousness, who silently witnesses the distinction as well as the oneness or Brahman where emptiness is filled with infinite possibilities. This state of emptiness in science is called the Field. Here, time does not mean duration that separates material events and space is not distance that separates two material objects. In this Field, there is continuity which joins together both space and time, called 'space-time continuum' or just 'space-time'. This space-time is Consciousness itself. In this Field, from the standpoint of physical observation objects appear as matter but from the standpoint of consciousness everything is an appearance which is nothing but consciousness. So, the universe is not based on bits of matter; it is not even made of atoms. All objects are appearances and can be seen either as waves or particles; and consciousness of them are the basic elements of reality. What is outstanding here is that since there is no separation of objects, this Field becomes unified.

This unified Field is Brahman which is One and all that there is.

Brahman simply is. This is the ultimate reality, which is Absolute, Whole and Complete, empty or zero. It is empty because it signifies both polarities, that of being and nonbeing, that of existence and nonexistence. Zero is that which contains all possible pairs that mutually cancel each other out. Therefore, zero is fundamental to all existence. Because of zero, everything is possible. Science calls this Zero Point Field, or the playground of Brahman. In this Zero Point Field, views, ideas, concepts and perceptions do not exist because here everything happens in the Now and therefore it becomes a field of infinite possibilities. When an awakened one realizes this, then he transcends and goes beyond. Gone, gone, gone beyond. Hari Om!

THE HIGHEST TRUTH

There is no dissolution, there is no origination and no one is in bondage. No one is striving or aspiring for salvation, and none is liberated. This is the highest truth.

- Mandukya Upanishad, Vaitathya-Prakarna, 32

Shankaracharya was once wandering in the Himalayas, seeking to find a guru. There he encountered a sage who asked him, “Who are you?” In response to this question, Shankaracharya burst forth with emotions, his heart suddenly opening up to the sage, In a similar way that Valmiki’s feelings turned into a well-composed stanza at the sight of a bird falling down to a shooter’s arrow. That led to the composition of probably the greatest epics of all times, Ramayana. But here Shankaracharya did not sit down to write an epic. What had been lying deep inside of him came out in the form of Atma shatakam – just six stanzas of an extempore composition that brings out the essence of the highest truth. This is an extraordinary composition that brings out the freedom and joy of being, the very knowledge of knowing the self. Chidananda rupe Shivoham Shivoham.

According to Advaita Vedanta, Brahman is the only reality, nothing else exists. Other than Brahman, everything else, including the universe, material objects and individuals are false.

But these false objects can be escribed; Brahman cannot be described. Therefore, Brahman is described as *neti, neti* because It cannot be described as this or that because It happens to be the basis of reality. How can the source of reality be described?

In this regard, Shankaracharya says that Brahman caused Its complex, illusory power to manifest as material world of separate forms, collectively known as *maya*. This *maya* has been deliberately created for two basic reasons: firstly, to hide Brahman from common human perception and secondly, to present *maya* or the material world in place of Brahman. However, even *maya*, which has been created by Brahman, is not aware of Brahman, though *maya* is part of Brahman and yet Brahman is untouched by *maya*. In other words, Brahman is both *sat* and *asat*, absolutely pure, completely hidden from human eye as well as perception, indescribable, homogeneous, source of all sources.

Now, since time immemorial, we have been trying to know this Brahman. Our instrument with which to know Brahman is our mind, but this mind is under the influence of *maya*. So, here, Brahman becomes the *Ishvar*, i.e. Brahman with *maya*. The *Ishvar* that we imagine while meditating is the same *Ishvar* we see in the temples and in the calendar paintings. Shankaracharya uses a metaphor that when the “reflection” of the Cosmic Spirits falls upon the mirror or *maya*, it appears as *Ishvar* or *saguna Brahman* or Brahman with attributes.

Now, this too is false because Brahman appears as Ishvar due to the curtain of maya. So, a personal God is only true in the pragmatic level just as the world is true in the pragmatic level. It is here only that we receive the fruits of our actions or karmas. However, at the transcendental level, Ishvar's actual form is formless, the ultimate reality.

How do we get to know this formless form? By negating all that is not atman. Chidananda Rupa Shivoham Shivoham. The Atmashatakam begins like this" I am not mind, nor intellect, nor ego, nor the reflection of inner self or chitta. I am not the five senses. I am beyond that. I am not the ether, nor the earth, nor the fire, nor the wind – I am, indeed, that eternal knowledge and bliss, Shiva, love and pure consciousness."

Vyas has said elsewhere that this universe is viewed by the wise as unreal. It is seen as a crack on the ground that a rope appears to be in the darkness. Further, it is seen as a bubble created by rain, which remain ever unstable, devoid of bliss and ceasing to exist after dissolution. This means that from the standpoint of Highest Reality, all duality is unreal. If all duality is unreal, then what remains?

Atman is not a part of Brahman that must ultimately dissolve into since that is the purpose of existence. In reality, atman is Brahman itself, the whole of Brahman. Since atman is the whole of Brahman, then there is no individual atman. The analogy

that can be given here is that of the reflection of moon on water. If you place, say twenty jars filled with water on the terrace during the full moon night, you will find the reflection of the moon in all the twenty jars. This does not mean that there are twenty moons because they are appearing in twenty jars. There is only one moon. Similarly, atman cannot become multiple by twenty people saying simultaneously, “I am happy”. The common and constant factor that permeates in these twenty people is that they say the same thing: “I am happy”. Then there are twenty other people saying, “I am not happy”. The “I” here is the silent witness, free from merits and demerits, free from experiences and impressions, equal to Brahman.

This amounts to saying that all our dealings are matters of avidya or ignorance because when the reflection of atman falls on avidya, atman becomes jiva, a living body with senses. It is only then that each jiva becomes a unique individual. If all these dealings are matters of unawareness, it is the awareness which is the purpose of our births. However, this striving for awareness leads to a distinct existential dilemma which comes from the knowledge of unreality or the proof of maya. The fact remains that nothing exists. Chidananda Rupa Shivoham Shivoham.

This whole universe, says the Vaitathaya-Prakarna, is known to be unreal, just as a dream and magic are seen to be unreal, or as

the gandharvanagar, an illusory city in the sky is seem to vanish suddenly before one's very eyes. In scientific experiments, quantum has shown that everything is in the realm of the possible. Imagine two brick walls with the first one having two holes in it, each the same size. After firing a few rounds of bullets through these holes, you would notice that on the second walls there are two clusters of hits in line with the two holes. Now, if you pass light through these holes, see what happens. Light travels like waves, and the pattern on the second wall appears as an interference pattern of alternate dark and light bands across the wall. Now, if you fire individual photons through the holes, with only one photon at a time going through the set up, they collectively build up an interference pattern. If you repeat the experiment, this time with only one hold open, photons will collect behind the open hole only. But if you open the second hole, they start to form an interference pattern – which means that the photons from the cluster of the first open hole “know” that the second hole is now open. If you repeat this experiment watching the photons going through the holes, each photon will go through one. When we are not watching, the photons will go through both the holes at the same time! This means that the photon “knows” that it is being watched! Here is an example of the interaction of the observer with the experiment! When we are looking, the photon wave collapses into a definite particle. When we are not looking, it has its options!

This double slit experiment demonstrates that a particle does not have a definite location and what are passing through the holes are not material waves at all but “probability waves”. When the particle is observed, this wave passing through the slits at the same time makes an interference pattern on the second wall. When the particle is observed with detectors at the slits, this wave collapses into particle and makes a pattern just the way the bullets did on the second wall.

What this experiment suggests is that nothing is real until it has been observed!

Is this experiment suggesting that in the “real” world – outside the laboratory – nothing exists until it has been observed? Copenhagen Interpretation tells us exactly that! John Wheeler even suggested that it is only in the presence of the conscious observer the wave collapses to make the universe exist. Even Stephen Hawking says that there must be an observer “outside” the universe to look at the universe. If this is true, then the universe exists only because we are looking at it. Here, it may not be out of place to say that laws of physics may be familiar, but they do not always work in a quantum world. Here, events are governed by probabilities.

Therefore, if nothing is real, then how can we even think of the Big Bang, the origin of the universe and its dissolution? In fact, there was never a beginning or an end. And if there is no

origination or dissolution, then the individual soul is not under any bondage whatsoever. Both origination and dissolution belong to realm which is real. However, in the quantum world, reality as we know is questioned. Again in Vaitathya-Prakarna, it is written: “This world, when ascertained from the standpoint of its essential nature, does not exist as different. Nor does it exist in its own right. Nor do phenomenal things exist as different or non-different from one another or from Self. This is what the knowers of Truth understand”. Chidananda Rupa Shivoham Shivoham.

So, if nothing exists, any everything is unreal, where is the striving and why? Is there a need to work and suffer? Why go after wealth and material things? Even if we do not go after material things, where is liberation and from what are you liberating yourself? Shankaracharya ends Atmashatakam in this way: “I am all pervasive. I am without any attributes, and without any form. I have neither attachment to the world, nor to liberation. I have no wishes for anything because I am everything, everywhere, every time, always in equilibrium. I am, indeed, that eternal knowing and bliss, Shiva, love and pure consciousness”.

Isha Upanishad opens with a wonderful sentence that whatever moves is covered by Isha. All this is but the Self, so whose is wealth? Now, because nobody has wealth which can be coveted,

where is the need to identify with external objects? Since all this is but the Self, then the hankering after things that are unreal is not a wise act since Brahman pervades everything and we all are a part of the Supreme Self. HARI OM.

THE KNOWER IN THE FIELD

Lord Krishna says in the Bhagwad Gita:

This body, Arjun, is termed as the Field and he who knows it, is called the Knower of the Field by the sages discerning the truth about both. Know Myself to be the Knower of the Field in all the Fields, Arjun. And it is the knowledge of the Field and Knower which I consider as true knowledge. (XIII, 1-2)

There is a popular Vedantic story which goes like this. On their journey, ten men came to a river. They swam across. Upon reaching the other side of the river, they counted to ensure that no one was missing. Each time they counted, the answer came to nine. Believing that one of them had drowned, they began to weep. At that time a sage was passing by. He met them and asked them why they were lamenting. They said that one of them had drowned while they were crossing the river. They were ten then, now they are nine. Then the sage asked them to stand in a line. He counted them, tapping each on the shoulder with his stick. Finally, he tapped the last man and announced that they were all ten in number. Rejoicing, the men thanked the sage and went about their journey.

What is the point of telling this story? It is in that each man had forgotten to count himself. And the sage happened to meet them to remind each one of his own self. But do we

really forget our own self? We do, in all circumstances. In fact, we are only remembering about ourselves by identifying with our bodies, our likes, dislikes, desires, preferences and needs. However, what the sage is reminding us is that we ignore the real self that we are – we are not realizing the knowledge of the true self.

For the Vedantist, the Self is not something which is remote, unattainable, or even an object. It is here and now. Yajnavalkya tells King Janaka that the individual self when born attains a body as well as acquires its attributes. Then it resides in two abodes: in the present life consisting of body, organs, objects, impressions and experiences; and the second one which is yet to be experienced and which it does after giving up this body. So long as this self, which is eternally conscious, resides in this body, the body is said to have life and experiences. While this self may have a certain place in the body where it resides, but because of its quality of intelligence, it pervades the whole body. Yajnavalkya tells King Janaka that this self is the infinite entity that is identified with the intellect, while remaining within the body. Shankaracharya explains that intellect is that which is illumined and the light of the self is that which is illumined, meaning that through the similarity of intellect, the self assumes the likeness of everything. Yajnavalkya states that there is another abode other than the two from where the individual self sees the two abodes, and this junction is called the dream

state. When the individual self realizes that all these abodes are myself, who am in all, then it assumes its true form by transcending all these forms. This self then moves to a higher state, beyond the body, beyond the desires, beyond the experiences and impressions, and remains in a state which is devoid of limitations, which is beyond intellect, eternal, infinite. This is the state which is self-luminous, supreme and pure Bliss. However, while there can be no knowledge in the absence of the body, there can be no liberation in the presence of the body. Therefore, the presence of the self in the body is essential for the attainment of liberation. So, this body, this Kshetra, this Field, is the springboard for jumping into the higher dimension, the realm of Eternal Light. Once freed from relative existence, man regains his real nature and now is no longer different from Brahman. "This Supreme Brahman," Lord Krishna explains, "who is the lord of beginningless entities, is neither sat nor asat. . . Though perceiving all sense-objects, it is devoid of all senses. Though unattached, it is the sustainer of all nonetheless; and though attributeless, it is the enjoyer of gunas, the three modes of Prakriti." (XIII, 12-14).

The problem comes when we tend to forget this self because our lives are spent in identifying with what we like and dislike, in identifying with the external material objects because that is what we see. Self cannot be an object to be identified. Anything that the self observes cannot be the self, which means that it is

the witness also. In Brihadarankaya Upanishad it is said: “This self is the Lord of all beings; as all spokes are knit together in the hub, all things, all gods, all men, all lives, all bodies, are knit together in that self.” Human bodies and other things in space are made of the gross elements but things that are in the mind are subtle. To be a witness of them all, is of a different order. It is the self that does this task. And to know that self indeed is a revelation.

But who wants to know? Neither the witness nor the self because the questions are only arisen by the ego. And this ego identifies itself with this body. According to Sigmund Freud, ego is the executive function of personality. The Sanskrit word ahamkara means “I am the doer” or “I as an executive function”. But Brahman does nothing. It witnesses, it observes, it is the source of all. Yet, it does nothing. Actions only take place in maya, which is the dream of Brahman. People think that they are doing actions, that they are the causes of events like happiness, tragedy, growth and movements. But Vedanta says that all this is false. All these are mental concepts only which is known when the individual being is awake. The objects and the play of senses come alive when one is wide awake. What happens to them when one is in deep sleep? In that state, since there is also a loss of ego, such actions do not take place, as there is no identification with external objects. When such a stage is achieved, especially when there is a loss of ego, the

true self is found shining by itself. A master knows that the ego is unreal and goes about living in the world, continuing to act. The only difference is that he, a Realized One, knows that he is not doing anything, but only witnessing what he does. His actions are movements in nature, events in the Field even as he observes the Field. The man with ego is reminded by this lower knowledge saying that “I do”. However, a Realised One, which is not the abode of ego, but the illumined self, has this higher knowledge reminding him of “I do nothing at all.”

When Lord Krishna says that “it is the knowledge of the Field and Knower which I consider as true knowledge,” He is saying that there are two kinds of knowledge. The lower knowledge is simply to know the field and the higher knowledge is to know the knower of the field. Katha Upanishad has a striking passage in this regard: “The self-existent Lord destroyed the outgoing senses. Therefore, one sees the outer things and not the inner self. Now and again, a daring soul, a rare discriminating man, desiring immortality, has looked back and found himself.” Here, “found himself” means knowing the knower of the field.

Now, if the higher knowledge is to know the knower, then who is he who knows the knower? Vedantists say that here the knower of the Field cannot be an object. In fact, he is the ultimate subject. So, he cannot be known. Higher knowledge does not mean becoming aware of an object. That only happens

with empirical knowledge. This higher knowledge or self-knowledge is not an act recognizing something external but a realization of the knower because as Brihadaranyaka Upanishad states that the knower's function of knowing can never be lost. Self-knowledge does not have an object of knowing. Brahman cannot be an object of knowledge in the ordinary sense since it surpasses the intellect in subtleness. Therefore, intellectual reasoning too is insufficient in the matter of its understanding or in its proof through testimony. According to Linga Purana, since It encompasses all, absorbs and enjoys the external objects or the objects of the world, and since from It alone the world draws its continuous existence, therefore, It is called atman. This indwelling Self, which is one's own reality, having closed the eyes and turned away from all sense-objects sees Itself. In this context, Yama explains to Nachiketa that "His form does not exist within the range of vision; nobody sees Him with the eye. When this Self is revealed through deliberation, It is realized by the intellect, the ruler of the mind that resides in the heart." It is the intellect that dissuades the mind from its occupations with the external objects. According to Upanishads, Brahman or Self is identified only through deliberation. Only then, when the intellect becomes pure, and mind and heart are unoccupied with objects, arises a simple conviction: aham brahmasmi. Such a one sees the indwelling Self in this way alone because the same person cannot engage himself in the sense-objects and to have wisdom of the Self at the same time. Having reached

this stage of true knowledge, the Realised One then shines with his own illumination. Indeed, at the peak of spiritual experience, the person sees his own form in a flood of supreme light arising from within, which actually constitutes the realization of Brahman, the immortal atman.

The true state of perfection is the state of illumination. It is the light which is present in the universe but which does not illuminate objects. Chandogya Upanishad says: “They (i.e. the knowers of Brahman) see everywhere the Supreme Light, which shines in Brahman, which is all-pervading like the light of day and which belongs to the primeval Seed. Perceiving the higher light in the sun—which is above the darkness of ignorance—as the higher light in the heart, perceiving the Supreme Light which is higher than all lights, we have reached the Highest Light, the Sun, the most luminous among the gods, yes, we have reached the Highest Light, the Sun, the most luminous among the gods.” That this light which shines beyond this heaven, beyond the whole creation, beyond everything, in the highest worlds which are unsurpassingly good, is certainly this which is the light within the person and that the Purusha is greater than that and that the Immortal is established in His Own Effulgence.

Lord Krishna says: “That supreme Brahman is said to be the light of all lights and entirely beyond maya. That is knowledge

itself, worth knowing, and worth attaining through real wisdom, and is particularly abiding in the heart of all (Bhagwad Gita, XIII,17). Having realized 'THAT', the men of enlightenment do not pray for anything else. HARI OM.

FROM THE VEDAS

There are four steps of the speech. The seers know about these four steps. Out of these, three of the steps have been hidden in the cave of the heart. The fourth step of the speech is spoken by humans.” – Rig Veda – I.164.45

It is in the nature of the world to unveil itself. A word cannot survive in isolation. It always lives in relation to us humans. When that word unveils itself in the form of speech, we as humans become aware of the existence and its very complexities. In fact, the nature of reality unfolds through the words. Above all, it is the truth which has a large bearing on the source of the word itself.

However, the problem arises when we come to know that it is only on one plane do we speak the words, the rest of the three having been hidden from us. It is only after passing through this lower plane that we can enter the three higher levels of speech. When we realise that the words have become the Voice, a power of expression, do we understand that we have ourselves transcended to the higher planes.

It is through the expression of words that we can reach the source of the word itself, which is the abode of the gods, of cosmic powers, which resides in the cave of our heart. There, in the cave of the heart, words do not come, as there is nothing to express.

SEEKING SOLUTIONS

Consider all that we have accomplished. Consider the empowerment that our accomplishments have brought to us. Consider also the mandate that we have given ourselves for assessing what we set out to do. But above all, consider the reasons behind our burning desires for achievements. Were they simply meant to generate developments, advancements, and power, soothe the ego, or did these desires trigger a process that led to happiness? Once again, consider the simple fact that animals do not harbor even an iota of desire for wealth and happiness. Probably, they do not even know what happiness is. We do, and thus we are endlessly trying to find it.

Yes, humanity has been continually pondering over this age-old question: Will I be healthy, wealthy and wise? Throughout the centuries, the query has, more or less remained the same, though the methods have changed with time, and among varying cultures. Even Aristotle believed that the “good is that at which all things aim. All men aim at happiness – happiness is the good of man”. And in its quest to achieve health, wealth and happiness, humankind developed knowledge, science, religion, technology and its applications, and even tried to grasp the unknown.

These developments have given humans power, liberated them from the many perils they faced, encouraged them to initiate

paradigm shifts and shrank their worlds. What has been increasingly significant in the witnessing of these great and dramatic developments is that humans have been catapulted into the future. These advancements have endowed nearly every human being with the ability to improve living conditions and make life not only comfortable but also enjoyable.

Advancements and developments have been an ongoing process since man first learnt how to use tools. Today, these tools are the gadgets that surround him from the moment he rises in the morning till he goes to bed. Apart from technology, religion also has played a significant role in the evolution of human civilization, evolving beliefs concerning the cause, nature and purpose of the universe, delving into aspects that would remove humans from poverty, weakness and sorrow.

But has the typical human being been able to achieve what he set out to do in the first place? Not exactly! As India's leading English poet, Dr Markand Paranjpe says in his essay "Sacred India": "The richest among us are not necessarily the happiest. They have their own share of problems and tensions, mostly prompted by the desire to own and consume more and more. They do not radiate peace and contentment. Rather, they come across as dissatisfied, aggressive, self-centred and violent individuals".

Health, wealth and happiness reside in the realm of transcendence. These are mere motions and you cannot grasp

them with your fingers. Yet, in its quest for these emotions, humankind has excelled in brilliant genius. And in this bursting of excellence, human beings have been faced with crucial choices.

The first among many choices has been that of materialism. We have allowed ourselves to consume more than we can withstand, to become slaves of branded products. We have started to believe, as Mathew Webb, founder of the World Mind Society, states that good living is defined by the amount of money that we can earn and spend. “The more the better” is now a global trend, a road-map for success.

Yes, in its wake, this road-map for success has used up essential components of which this earth is made of – minerals, forests, landscapes, potable water, streams and rivers and even the air. When the physical world suffers, we also do.

Which brings us to the second of the many choices. Our bodies are now over-stressed, over-medicated and over-worked. Our bodies are also undernourished because we consume food that is not suitable to us. We have made a mockery of our physical world by not only polluting it but also by over-using it. And we believe that we are civilized.

Has all this given us happiness? Aristotle believed that happiness consisted of a sense of balance and of well-being. And this,

according to him, could be reached only by the midway course in thought and action, something that Lord Buddha also taught. In his essay, “The Secret of contentment”, Norman Prichard states that real contentment “is an inward state; it is independent of external things. Many of us are subjected to what has been called the tyranny of things. To own a number of valuable things may lead to anxiety lest those things be lost”. Which brings us to the conclusion that there is, after all, no co-relation between our material status and our inner well-being.

Real contentment comes when you turn your attention from the environment, to shut your eyes and contemplate things that are not material but real. We know that despite the most adverse life conditions, many of us manage to live reasonably positively, even joyously. This is only because of the abundance of fortitude, resilience, a trust in life and tremendous dignity.

So, there is really no better way to choices than to realize the exact nature of reality. It is not a matter of creating our own reality which is probably a psychological delusion. Reality has always existed, regardless of what we think because reality is an aspect of truth, which is eternal. However, the imbalances both in the environment and in the human body are the direct result of our intention at ignoring the truth and accepting artificial ideals. These artificial ideals include consumerism and its linking with happiness. Once these artificial ideals take on significant roles in the lives of human beings, finding solutions

to the problems that they create can be difficult. This leads to a very piquant situation, really – human beings often are troubled by the knowledge that they really don't fit in.

Realizing the exact nature of reality would lead to finding the true purpose of life. The purpose of life is evolution, especially through the expansion of consciousness. But something holds us back. And this something are man-made ideas of materialism and culturalism. We are, as it were, caught up in the assumptions of the culture in which we are born. Materialism tells us to get whatever we can quickly as life is short. Culturalism asks us to help a set of people and their ideals survive for thousands of years. All these ideals ignore the fact that nature has its own purpose and it works without man's knowing.

It would not be assuming too much when we say that modern society is a product of not just human thought but also human intention. Thoughts, feelings and images – false and real – are all created by intentions. The materials that we have created also have been the products of human intention. By mastering intention, we can master thoughts, emotions, the body and all the underlying problems of society.

FROM THE VEDAS

”Agni is That, Aditya is That, Vayu is That, Chandrama is That, the Bright One is That, Brahman is That, Waters are That, Prajapati is That.”

- Yajur Veda 32.1

Nothing can be compared to That. That alone exists. The Supreme Power cannot be described by epithets involving genders like he or she. So, That alone is That. This is the transcendent That which is the highest, the supreme, the all-pervading, the all-encompassing. That exists in everything and everything exists in That.

Now, however, what is of significance here is the mention of Aditya, the Sun, which also is That. Sun is not just a physical star or a heating principle, or a ball of fire but that which energises the Self of all created things. The Sun is not a fireball of atomic energy but a life giver. We are here on this earth because of the Sun. The Sun gives us the seasons that give us the food that give us energy to subsist on the physical level in which our mind and self resides. The Sun sheds His light everywhere so that we can see and know. From this knowing we become realized and enlightened. Seekers of Truth and lovers of mankind pay tribute to this globe of vital energy that fills life into all that is created, including us. You cannot see

God in its glory but you can witness His powers through His divine operation in nature. If there is any visible God, then it is the Sun.

SPACE FOR THOUGHTS

The essence of meditation is, in fact, an overall transformation of personality. Regular practice of meditation leads to a healthier life, inculcates self-control, normalizes the incorrect way of living, balances the negative effect of any unnatural function and transforms the entire thinking process.

As thought is the basis of any activity, meditation deals directly with the thinking process. Sages and mystics have, time and again, said that the mind is like an ocean and thought starts from its deepest level, from a field of pure energy. Each thought has a direction which we experience through thinking, speech and action. Meditation teaches us to make these thoughts more powerful, creative and intelligent.

Meditation does not mean achieving a state of nothingness. Perhaps one of the biggest obstacles in meditation is the mistaken notion that it means stopping one's thoughts. Of course, it is difficult to put an end to the stream of thoughts in the mind, but meditation helps in achieving a conscious control over that.

In fact, meditation takes the help of a specific thought as a vehicle to go to the field of pure consciousness, pure energy, deep in the mind, thus experiencing the process of transcendental consciousness. This specific thought is called the mantra, which draws the attention of the meditator inwards,

reverses the process of wandering of the mind and controls the thought-waves.

The technique is easy as it does not involve any suggestion, belief, mental control or physical labour. All that has to be done is remain awake and attentive. The entire process of meditation works by itself. Do not try to stop or control the thoughts because that is not the purpose of meditation. You can remain concentrated and alert by the silent repetition of a mantra. Anyone can meditate as Maharishi Mahesh Yogi showed through his Transcendental Meditation technique. According to him: “The technique may be defined as turning the attention inward towards the subtle levels of thought until the mind transcends the experience of the subtlest state of thought and arrives at the source of thoughts.”

The focusing then, by itself, happens between successive thoughts or mantra. This gap is the space of pure knowledge where the distinction between the subject and the object is lost. This space is pure, pristine, free from identification and infinite.

This space is everywhere. This space is where the thoughts come from. This space helps the human mind to clear itself of the thoughts and emotions, personal likes and dislikes and all the artificial reality that have been culturally programmed into it. Enlightenment happens all by itself, an awareness that is

pure and beyond knowledge and understanding. The mind and the heart then join together, shed all their differences and are both happy. Then you begin to live in total bliss.

(P.S.: The side gains are basically confined to the physical level of the being. A healthy body is achieved, mind becomes clear, fear, anxiety and doubt are destroyed, depression is removed, stress is reduced. All these increases your efficiency in daily work and situations and helps you live a long and healthy life.)

WE ARE SUCH FUNNY PEOPLE

We are such funny people. We create concepts like God and religion, write books and call them holy and fight with each other to establish their supremacy.

We create weapons and then do R&D on them to create still better and more powerful weapons to use them on each other. (Where else would we use them?)

We are such funny people. We create homes, cars, gadgets and various other objects and struggle throughout our lives to acquire them.

We will cheat, murder, improvise every fraudulent means in our greed for acquisition.

We think we are superior and will do anything to prove and establish this concept.

We are so funny that now we have started carrying a portable gadget to keep ourselves imprisoned in this mirage – we will play games on this gadget, watch movies and send tweets and emails and then pat ourselves on our backs, saying that we are connected with the world.

Which world is this - the world in which you were born or a world which you have created in these gadgets?

We will prefer to waste away our precious lives running after a mirage and will not, even for once, pause and wonder as to where we are, and why we are.

Once in a while, someone simply steps away and finds peace and happiness. The rest of the world first wonders at this person, and then gets back to the job of chasing the mirage.

We are such funny people.

I sometimes wonder how people in the other worlds would be living. Would they, like us, be killing each other for concepts, money, food and raping their women just for the fun of it? Would they be doing jobs to acquire objects and buying foods which actually Nature gives freely? Or would they be established in togetherness and living with each other as equal partners of this creation?

MATERIALISM IS NOT TRUE

Science is a system of belief which tries to suppress data that is contrary to the theories it presents and ignores questions about which it has no answers. For the scientists, nothing lies beyond what they can see, feel or taste. For them even the mind does not exist. Scientists believe that mind is only an illusion generated by the brain. Some others don't even want to use any terminology that implies that mind exists. And thoughts and feelings are explained away as simply firing synapses. This puts a question mark over what we know are experiences.

Take, for instance, the spiritual experiences that are explained away by neuroscientists as brain suffering from temporal-lobe epilepsy. However, there is abundant data on spiritual experiences that is a great embarrassment for materialism. (It is embarrassing because this data is serious evidence against materialism.) No wonder, a great war is going on these days between scientists and psi researchers.

There was a time when scientific explanations of religion and spirituality were worth considering. Freud had said that childhood memories of a father figure led to religious people believing in God. While this interpretation was based on Christianity, the idea was not ridiculous. A father-son or father-daughter relationship is a relationship of experience, and it is so complex that it cannot be explained away by any

mathematical formula scientists are so fond of. And it is also true that spiritual beliefs, rituals and organized religion arose from relational and spiritual experiences.

Yet, science today has embarrassingly gone so far in its materialistic explanations of spirituality and religion that it is now touching the ridiculous. Recent progress in neuroscience and genetics has pushed scientists to the realm of foolishness: God gene, infidelity gene, violence gene, fat gene, useless gene, useful gene! Someone even went to the extent of building a “God helmet” to show that there is a God spot! Science can be so entertaining!

While there is no “God switch”, there is considerable evidence to show that we undergo spiritual experiences. Here, what is at hand is the complexity of the experience. Here, the experiencer contacts a reality which is outside, for which there is no explanation or description, which is beyond words, which can happen only in silence, and in a realm in which materialism cannot enter, let alone explore for the simple reason that here no theories and no scientific laws can apply. This is the realm of Becoming, of Oneness, of total acceptance, of total Knowing. Spiritual experiences can be so immediate and deep that they are capable of transforming the nature of human being.

he problem is that materialism cannot even answer key questions about the nature of being human. Then, should scientists propagate false ideas that we are not spiritual beings because they haven't found the spiritual gene?

LIVING IN LIMITATIONS

We are living in limitations.

Our thoughts are limited, and we tend to repeat our thoughts again and again.

Our knowledge is limited. Nothing new has been added to what had been said and written ten to twenty thousand years or more ago. We have only interpreted or twisted that same knowledge that has been passed to us over these years. Endless numbers of books have been written in the last five hundred years but they say all the same thing, albeit in different manner and approach. For example, there are several books on gemstones but they say the same thing although with different presentations.

Our language has its own limitations. There is an end to the number of words that we know. There is always a last page in the dictionary. If anything is added, it is either borrowed or is a renewal of the old words.

Our work/job has its own limitations. We do not step out of the demarcations or the walls that have been created, but which we call a tunnel vision.

Our vision is limited. We can see only this much and not more. When we want to see things at greater distance, we create

telescopes, but telescopes too have limited visions. They can see not more than what we have made them to see.

Our imagination too is limited. We can think of this much and not more. The vastness that we can imagine is actually a blank.

Our earth on which we live is limited. And there is this solar system, this galaxy, and this universe. There are only these things that we see, we hear and we taste.

Even our life is limited. We live for a number of years, give and take five or ten more or less years in an individual's life.

So, what do you think of yourself?

THE COSMOS IN MY ATOM

The outer is a reflection of the inner. Mind comes first, matter comes later. Things are made in spirit before they get translated into shape that you and I see and feel. In other words, we become creators of our own experiences. It also means our mind is infinitely powerful. But that also makes us responsible for the conditions in which we find ourselves. Get the picture?

As in the atom, so is the universe;

As is the microcosm, so is the macrocosm;

As is the human body, so is the cosmic body;

As is the human mind, so is the cosmic mind.

There is a particular training that is given to baby elephants in India. To train the elephant and to keep it in control, it is tied with an iron chain to a huge tree. Gradually, as the elephant starts to grow up, the size of the tree and the size of the chain start to shrink. Ultimately, this big animal is tied with a flimsy rope. And the elephant is unable to escape. He thinks he is imprisoned because he has made a commitment to a particular reality from the time that he was a baby.

Psychologists call this particular phenomenon of the elephant as Premature Cognitive Commitment. It is premature because the elephant is made to believe this particular reality (of being imprisoned) from an early age. However, what is of significance

here is that this perception of being imprisoned to a tree is now deeply enmeshed in the very being of an adult elephant. And anything that doesn't reinforce this initial interpretation of reality doesn't get into the very being of the elephant. So, what this means is that if we don't have a concept or an idea that something exists, then our very being will not even take it.

This shows that our interpretation of reality is limited, indeed, if not totally incomplete. Consider these little known but easily forgotten facts. The human eye can see in an area of about 160 degrees to 200 degrees. Beyond that, nothing exists for us. The human eyes see that the earth is flat and we don't believe that anymore. The ground that we stand on is not stationary though it seems so to our senses. The human ear can hear sounds in the range of 20Hz to 20,000Hz. If there is sound beyond this range, we are not aware of it physically. It is interesting to discover that what we call perception is really the least reliable test of what reality is.

For good reasons, we know that we are not wholly conscious of ourselves nor do we know the workings of our mind, least of all the working of nature around us, in general. We are not even fully aware of the mechanics of reality. However, now we are beginning to learn that the universe is made up of two sorts of forces. And what are these two forces? Go to a physicist and he'll tell that the universe is made up of gravity and energy. Anything that exists out there and in you is made up of just

these two forces. Mind you, forces and not things. Gravity holds us to the ground, holds the nucleus of an atom together. Energy is what we experience as heat, electricity, something that moves. But that's only touching the surface. Quantum physics have taught us that every particle is just a wave, the energy of an underlying field. And this field is the unifying force which scientists call the Unified Field. Everything that exists is just made up of these forces.

Then, what about the material world? The material world is structured out of these forces. What we see as human bodies and cosmic bodies are actually energy fields that exist in space. In particular, the human body is not a mechanical piece of art but an expression of consciousness, a dynamic bundle of energy, of information, of intelligence. There is nothing solid in a human body. Even the bones, which apparently seem to be solid structures, keep on getting refreshed. The human body is made up of atoms that are moving at lightning speed around empty spaces. They are not material objects but fluctuations of energy and information. So are the cosmic bodies moving around in empty spaces in the universe. If the human bodies, stones, flowers, birds, cosmic bodies are fluctuations of energy and information, then what really is reality?

Vedas and Upanishads, in particular, have investigated into the nature of reality from two different levels of experience, one of which is the phenomenal or the relative level which sees the

universe as diverse, in which we are aware of our ego; and the other is transcendental level which sees differences merging together into a nondual consciousness.

Transcendental reality is Brahman. Mundaka Upanishad says: “Brahman alone, the Greatest, is this whole universe” (II.2.11). It is Pure Consciousness that encompasses everything. Rig Veda says:

त्तो विराडजायत विराजो अधि पुरुशः ।

स जातो अत्यरिच्यत पश्चाद भूमिमथो पुरः ॥

“From that Purusha was born the ever shining universe, and from that was born Brahman and he spread himself everywhere and created the earth and then the bodies of all being” (X.90).

Everything came into existence from that Purusha or Brahman. He alone existed. Brahman is that which is permanent in the things that keep on changing. Everything else, even the human body, keeps changing all the time. Brahman is essentially existence and existence cannot change, can never perish. It has not external and internal relations. It is not limited by space and time because it alone exists. In Chandogya Upanishad, it is said: “Existence alone was this in the beginning, one alone without a second” (VI.2.1). Again, in the Rig Veda, it is said that in the beginning there was neither non-being nor being (X.129.1). However, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says that

Brahman has two forms, the formed and the formless (II.3.1). But a substance cannot have an attribute if it alone exists as Brahman is spoken of in Nasadiya Sukta. That alone is. The entire creation is a spiritual unity and is one with Brahman. Brahman is the basic experience. We can remove all sorts of the thinking process but we cannot think away that we are. That we are is the very nature of our being and we cannot deny this. And that we are is not an object of our experience because one is without a second. There is no relative attributes involved here, there is no stretching process involved here, there is nothing that needs completing. Brahman is absolute. That alone is. There is fullness and there is knowing.

In fact, this process of knowing is existence itself. And existence exists in everything. Everything is known to exist. Even if a thing dies, it is known to do so because of its existence which supported it. Existence is a condition which cannot change because there is neither death nor birth involved here. Everything else is in some state or the other. Everything is in a state of flux, ever changing, always moving. There is momentum in the universe. It is filled with prana, throbbing with energy and life. Everything is filled with existence. But nothing fills existence. Existence is the “one alone without a second”. Therefore, existence is absolute. It is Brahman.

How do we find the nature of this existence, this Brahman? The answer lies within us. Our own existence can solve this problem. There is a Vedic dictum “That thou art” which expresses that Brahman is identical with the self of man, known as atman. Atman is a subject that is known to be within us. Brahman and atman - what is outside is also inside us.

Now, how do we experience this reality? By not identifying with our mind. Our mind is the greatest obstacle in our effort to get a glimpse of the timeless, Brahman and atman, Pure Consciousness. Like in the case of the elephant tied to a rope, it creates its own reality. This is a curtain of concepts and ideas that the mind places between you and the universe, the ultimate reality. This curtain removes you from the now, the present moment in which you live.

It is said that on an average, we have as much as 60,000 thoughts in a day. What is disturbing is that ninety per cent of these thoughts we have today are the ones we had yesterday. Now wonder then we have predictable biological and psychological responses to any given situations. And we all fall into the pattern of living, diseases, ageing and death. Regarding this, Shankaracharya said that the reason we grow old and die is because we see others growing old and dying. What we see we become. Once we removed the bundle of conditioned reflexes from our body-mind, a whole new experience opens up in front of us.

The dramatic outcome of this is the experience of unity with the cosmos that leads to absolute happiness or Bliss Consciousness. In Shiv Sutra, it is explained like this: “By establishing one’s mind in the heart, the Universal Consciousness, the whole world of perception, appears as one’s own nature” (I.15).

All that you see is the maya of reality, a façade of materialism that pervades around you with such vigour. You recognize that you are not in the body, the body is not you. You are neither the mind, nor the universe.

For you “the whole universe is the totality of your own energies” (Shiv Sutra III.30). Lakshman Joo, in his commentary states: “On merging with Supreme Consciousness – the I-ness of one’s own consciousness – or infinite being is opened wide to one. In him huge stars arise and subside, planets collide, supernova explode now! All being live and breathe in him, all events occur in that one”. HARI OM!

THE MYSTERY OF ETERNAL YOUTH

At a certain stage, the body begins to undergo involution and aging. The process, in all likelihood, appears to be irreversible. Until some new research can demonstrate that aging can be controlled, we're going to continue to grow old.

But then what is aging? Is it the number of years you have lived, lower energy levels, mental fuzziness, waning sense of purpose or is it oxidation? A popular theory doing the rounds in the West blames oxidation, which means production of free radicals that damage the components of cells. Other theories say that molecular damage may not necessarily lead to aging but it has been observed that oxidation causes flexibility problems and wrinkling of the skin. Which means that the human body may actually be governed by some sort of a biological clock that starts to slow down or may even turn itself off – and we grow old or start to age.

But then there are specific instances where the biological clock has not been able to effectively influence a human being's energy level or sense of purpose. Dr Deepak Chopra, in his book, "Ageless Body, Timeless Mind", speaks of three distinct ways to measure a person's age – chronological, biological and psychological. "Only the first of these is fixed, yet chronological age (meaning how old you are by the

calendar) is also the most unreliable of the three...Time doesn't affect your body uniformly, however, practically every cell, tissue, and organ is aging on its own timetable, which makes biological age much more complex than chronological age," Dr Chopra writes.

A great many celebrities all over the world have been repeatedly asked the secret of their longevity, beauty and health. While for Khushwant Singh, it was the "driving ambition to do something" that kept him going, for Bollywood actor it was the way one looks forward with excitement. Earlier, scientists had been telling us that a very strict low-calorie diet may help prolong life, something which the ancient wisdom of ayurveda was so impressed with.

But there is no clear indication about how exactly aging is influenced by our eating habits. Dr Lala Surajnandan Prasad, in his book, "How To Live A Fruitful Hundred Years", writes: "Robust optimism and the capacity to relax as well as the autonomy to choose your diet will go a long way to ensure a healthy life free from various diseases". Frugal eating, rather than controlled diet, has been catching the imagination of almost every person who tries to live a long life. One Luigi Carnaro in Italy fasted from the age of 37, abstained from drinking, ate frugally and remained active till 103. He followed ancient Greek and Roman notions of

eating less as the secret of longevity. A thousand years ago, Charak in India spoke of overeating and heavy and fatty meals as causes of several ailments.

Actually, the lure of eternal youth has fascinated societies from ancient times. Rejuvenation therapies abound, both in the East and the West. Some have helped us find youthfulness again. Shriman Tapasvi Maharaj is said to have lived for 185 years (1770-1955) by conducting rejuvenating therapies. In 1974 people met Devraha Baba during the Kumbh Mela at Haridwar, who was said to have turned 160 years old that year. One of the most authoritative texts, “Charak Samhita”, speaks of rishis who left behind their urban life and retired to forests to regain youthfulness by learning and practicing the immortal science of rejuvenation or rasayan that has always been an important part of ayurveda. These involve recipes, dietary regimen and special health-promoting conduct and behavior.

Charak Samhita states: “The hermits known as the vaikhilyas and likewise other celebrated ascetics attained immense longevity from the use of rasayana. Shuffling off their decayed bodies, they secured for themselves fresh youth, freed themselves from languor, weariness and breathlessness, and were unhampered by disease, were single-minded, and endowed with intelligence, memory and strength. These

mighty ascetics practiced spiritual austerities and celibacy for unending years with exceeding devotion”.

Which means that physical training and dietary regime alone do not ensure longevity, mental and physiological states also matter. As long ago as the 2nd century BC, it was known in the West that an active mental life forestalled or delayed aging. Cicero, the famous philosopher at that time, suggested that old people preserve their intellect by preserving interests. In the “Charak Samhita”, it is written; “Those who desire protection from the adverse effects on their hearts must particularly avoid all that causes affliction of their mind”. Elsewhere, Charak says: “Even the wholesome food taken in proper quantity remains undigested due to anxiety, fear and anger”. The truth of these observations has now been confirmed. Mental activity is believed to activate brain cells, thus stimulating protective mechanisms such as DNA repair.

If the mind is set on a course of rejuvenation, the body will follow suit. Adi Shankara said that people grew older because they saw others getting old and die. What is becoming increasingly clear is that aging depends on the individual and not on external factors. Nothing holds more power over the body than beliefs of the mind. Religious writer Huston Smith wrote that in order to live, one needs

to believe “in that for which he lives”. As Dr Chora states in “Ageless Body, Timeless Mind”, “People languish and die when their core belief is gone”. In “Charak Samhita”, something to this effect was stated centuries earlier: “Persons who are not self-controlled will be unable to bear the sovereign herbs. It is only those who have conquered themselves who are competent to make use of these preparations”.

That apart, a great many projects in different parts of the world have been trying to develop methods that will prevent or even reverse the process of aging. The US-based Life Extension Foundation is using gene chips to develop a ‘gene expression profile’ of the aging process. It will find effects on longevity of genes in tissues and compare these changes to those seen in calorie-restricted animals. The objective is to extend life span in humans.

Calorie restriction is the most promising research in this interesting battle with death. It is also the only properly documented method.

But before we are able to crack the secret of aging, we must be absolutely clear about what we are doing. For one, do we know that the upper limit of human lifespan is? According to Rig Veda, it is 120 years. Scientists recognize that the maximum lifespan determined by genes cannot go beyond 120 years. The Geron Corporation, funded by American

millionaire Miller Quarles, has been trying to find methods to reverse the process of aging and probably extend lifespan. They work on the following premise – our cells divide and replicate themselves throughout our lifetime. But there is a fixed number of times that they do this. It has been observed that they replicate 50 times and then stop doing that and wither away. Scientists at the Geron Corporation have suggested that it may be possible to influence telomere, a repeating DNA sequence found at the end of chromosome to restore cells to their youthfulness and thus extend life. This means that aging then is a mere genetic programme that can be manipulated.

Indian sages have told us that a person is meant to evolve. The body is not the primary object but a mirror of our mind. Western science says that the aging is at the molecular level – but that's on the physical state. Dr Deepak Chopra says: “The ultimate boundary to human life is death and for thousands of years we have tried to travel beyond that boundary despite the obvious mortality of our bodies, moments arise when the clear perception of immortality shines through”.

Such perceptions do not fit in well with the worldview of science. Therefore, they have been labelled as religious. But these perceptions have profound effect on the process of

aging. Spiritual masters in the East, and especially India, have lived for many decades by achieving what in their parlance is called timeless awareness. It is difficult for the rational mind to even conceive of such a state, but attaining moksha is direct knowledge of timeless reality where all boundaries are broken.

On the physical level, diseases have been eliminated or controlled and lifesoan thus increased. We also know manipulation of any kind. Even with life forces, is against nature. But it would be wrong to suggest that the last word on aging has been said. Till then, let's live and let live! (2004)

FINDING ETERNAL HAPPINESS

Chapter One

1/. The aim of all human beings is the attainment of eternal happiness.

2/. We all desire a life which is free of sufferings, sorrows and diseases.

3/. Over the last several millennia, people have sought to find answers to the cause of sufferings, sorrows and diseases. Sri Krishna, Rama, Buddha, Jesus Christ – they all showed us the path towards happiness.

4/. Avatars, rishis, saints and guides also have sought to reveal the true nature of life and its meaning, thereby opening windows to happiness or ananda.

5/. There are two kinds of happiness or ananda.

6/. The first is worldly happiness; followed by the second, which is eternal happiness.

7/. First we seek worldly happiness, thinking that the world in which we live is real and eternal.

8/. Then we seek eternal happiness, knowing that the world in which we live is neither real nor eternal but a part of maya or illusion.

9/. Those who seek worldly happiness are seeking peace and happiness in external objects, including cars, houses, temples, gods and pilgrim centres.

10/. Those who seek eternal happiness know the real meaning of external objects, including cars, houses, temples, gods and pilgrim centres.

11/. It is not that there is a one way to seek worldly happiness and another way to seek eternal happiness.

12/. It is after fully experiencing worldly happiness that eternal happiness comes.

13/. After you have fully experienced an object, your desire for that same object ends; and you seek another. When all the desires for all the objects have ended, only then you get eternal happiness.

14/. It is now established that there is worldly happiness and eternal happiness. It is now established that both worldly and eternal happiness can be attained.

15/. Now, we discuss methods of attaining first worldly and then eternal happiness.

16/. The methods include tools that will assist you in the right understanding of the objects obtained, the working of your mind, the real meaning of suffering and happiness, purpose of life, karmas, planetary influences, body and mind types, and the aims and meaning of life, including your roles and responsibilities.

17/. The tools include right knowledge, balancing of energies, attainment of self-knowledge, samarthya – all leading to eternal happiness or ananda.

18/. Applications of these tools in your life will bring you in harmony with Mother Nature and remove all the deficiencies and diseases from your body and mind.

19/. Once you have established harmony with Mother Nature or the environment you are living in, then you will live a life which is self-centred, still and calm.

Chapter 2

Understanding Suffering

1/. The aim of all the beings is the attainment of infinite happiness.

2/. All of us want a life which is free of suffering, which is actually the goal of everyone who is born.

3/. Let us first understand what is suffering.

4/. Some say suffering is God's punishment on sinful people.

5/. Others see suffering as a test of faith in God or a test of humility.

6/. Then there are others who believe that it is caused by weakness in one's devotion to God.

7/. However, suffering is not necessarily punishment from a divine being but something that must be accepted and then transcended.

8/. In fact, suffering, both mental and physical, is the consequence of past inappropriate actions which is a natural consequence of the moral laws of the universe.

9/. Therefore, if you are suffering today then you are in a right position of your life because now is the time for you to experience suffering so that you satisfy the debt incurred for your past negative behavior, either I your past life or earlier in this life.

10/. Realise that this suffering that you are experiencing will go away but that does not mean that suffering will not come again.

11/. Both suffering and pain is always present in life and will continue their partnerships with you till your last breath.

12/. Understanding the right meaning of suffering will free us from the painful experiences that it gives.

13/. Suffering should not been seen as a solely negative experience but a transitory one while you are in this world and part of a cycle of living and rebirth.

14/. It is in our hands to increase sufferings or to decrease the experiences of sufferings.

15/. Desires, wants and attachment to the objects of this world contribute to suffering.

16/. Detachment to the possessions that we obtain contributes to happiness.

17/. Attachment means over-involvement in this world, excessive desires to obtaining objects and possessions as well as clinging to them. It also signifies our attempt to control this world in which are temporary residents although it is otherwise.

18/. Detachment is a positive state of mind because we remain in this world, possess everything that we want, whether objects or relationships, without clinging to them.

19/. Attachment actually means that this world or maya is controlling our minds and detachment means freedom from this control.

20/. Therefore, attachment leads to sufferings and detachment leads to happiness.

Chapter 3

Understanding Acceptance

1/. In order to achieve detachment, one must learn the Power of Acceptance.

2/. Acceptance does not mean that you become inactive and let everything happen around you, good or bad.

3/. Acceptance is not resignation or quitting.

4/. Acceptance means acknowledging the reality of events unfolding.

5/. You must become fully aware of your emotions, feelings and bodily sensations without following, resisting or disbelieving them.

6/. This is the key to detachment, this is the Power of Acceptance.

7/. Acceptance of pain, like the joint pain in arthritis, is more of a mental exercise than a decision or a belief. You accept the pain in the joints as a reality of your life.

8/. In this way, your acceptance of arthritic pain involves not struggling with pain but following a realistic approach to pain as you engage in everyday activities.

9/. In this way, you tolerate the uncomfortable things of life and achieve equanimity.

10/. By achieving equanimity you are now accepting the unpleasantness of pain as the result of your past and present karmas.

11/. Once you have accepted your pain as the result of your karmas, then you begin to shed your judgement of your pain and begin to gain positive experience from it.

12/. The practice of acceptance will lead you to detachment.

13/. Having understood the power of acceptance and detachment, you will now be able to lessen the attachment to material things – and even excessive desires for obtaining material things.

14/. Understand that acceptance-based strategies are opposite of control-based strategies.

15/. Control-based strategies result from desires to lessen experiences that are contrary to your thinking and beliefs.

16/. Acceptance-based strategies result from need to increase all experiences so that you learn and become wise.

17/. Control-based strategies, therefore, mean interference with your karmas, especially prarabdha, thus giving you anxiety, stress, diseases and pain.

14/. On the other hand, acceptance-based strategies give you freedom from the clutches of anxiety, pain and stress and allow you to work with your karmas.

Chapter 4

Understanding Karma

1/. From actions alone we create karmas. These actions are not merely performed by the body but also by our thoughts and feelings.

2/. These karmas bind us in a constant cycle of births and deaths.

3/. There is a way to get freedom from this cycle.

4/. Karmas or actions are of three types: kayika or bodily, vacika or through speech and manasika or mental.

5/. Know that during our waking state we perform all the three above types of actions.

6/. In our dream state, actions are manasika or mental.

7/. In deep sleep or sushipti, it appears that we are not performing any karmas. However, inner bodily functions, like heart beat and breathing, are done.

8/. Actions are also classified into five categories: nitya (daily actions), naimittika (actions performed sometimes), nishidha (prohibited actions), prayishchitta (propitiatory actions) and kamya (actions done with desire).

9/. In addition, panchyagya are also performed: brahma yagya (worshipping the Divine), pitr yagya (remembering ancestors), deva yagya (care of the environment), manushya yagya (feeding guests) and prani yagya (sharing food with animals).

10/. All of the above activities produce good sanskaras and not performing them generated bad sanskaras.

11/. However, in today's times, these activities need to be re-interpreted.

12/. Every action we perform leaves an impression in our mind or chitta. This is called sanskara.

13/. This chitta is the storehouse of impressions which keep on accumulating over all the number of lives that we have lived and are now living. This storehouse is known as Sanchita Karma.

14/. When atma enters the new physical body, i.e. when we take birth in the current life, we bring with us this storehouse with us. Sanchita Karma are the seeds of past life actions which, through future births, will bear fruit.

15/. When Sanchita Karmas are ready to be experienced in this current life, then our atma is setting them in motion, i.e. Prarabdha Karma.

16/. These decide the type of birth or yoni, parentage, environment and surroundings in which we are born and which experiences we will have. Prarabdha is portrayed in our kundali or horoscope.

17/. In the current life, we perform actions according to our Prarabdha and thereby exhaust accumulated karmas.

18/. During the current life, we perform new actions based upon our decisions, willingness and experiences. These fresh impressions are called Kriyamani Karmas, i.e. those karmas that are being made. In addition, when we are contemplating future actions, these are called Agami Karmas, whether they are performed or not.

19/. Kriyamani Karmas get added to the storehouse of Sanchita Karmas.

20/. A human being wanders from birth to birth until all the karmas in the storehouse are completely exhausted.

21/. There is a way to restrict the increasing impressions that reach the storehouse of Sanchita Karmas, which is discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Five

Understanding the Purpose of Life or Purusharthas

1/. In order to understand how to restrict impressions in the storehouse of Sanchita Karma, we must first know the aims of life or Purusharthas.

2/. Understand that we are living in a living universe, which is alive, intelligent and conscious.

3/. All the celestial bodies in the universe are intimately connected with each other through a cosmic connection in the same way that all the organs and tissues of our body are connected.

4/. Like the organs and tissues in our body, these celestial bodies also influence each other and send messages.

5/. The entire universe is one pulsating being filled with intelligence.

6/. In our Solar System, the Sun and the planets are living energies, representing different aspects of this Cosmic Intelligence or Cosmic Consciousness.

7/. For example, while Saturn represents discipline and perseverance, Jupiter displays qualities of higher wisdom and spirituality.

8/. This cosmic intelligence of the planets is given to you at the time of your birth, which actually is the time chosen by your atma or the soul. These planetary influences get reflected in the events, desires, experiences, etc that the atma has elected to undergo in the current life by entering into the physical body. These can be known by the study of your horoscope.

9/. A horoscope is made up of 12 houses, each representing a different facet of your life. For example, the second house reflects your wealth and fortune while the 12th house reflects expenses and losses.

10/. In this way, each of the Purusharthas is connected with the set of houses.

11/. The Purusharthas are referred to as Four Aims of Life.

12/. The first aim is Dharma: to fulfil our purpose and duty in the current life.

13/. The second aim is Artha: to accumulate necessary resources.

14/. The third aim is Kama: to enjoy the pleasures of the world.

15/. The fourth aim is Mokasha: to set ourselves free from attachment to dharma, artha and kama.

16/. These Purusharthas are connected in this way:

a/. Dharma, associated with fire element, is represented by 1st, 5th and 9th House.

b/. Artha, associated with earth element, is represented by 2nd, 6th and 10th House.

c/. Kama, associated with air element, is represented by 3rd, 7th and 11th House.

d/. Moksha, associated with water element, is represented by 4th, 8th and 12th House.

17/. In your current life, you are bringing all the past actions of all the past lives with you. This is your Destiny, this is your Fate.

18/. In this current life, whatever you do is Kriyaman Karma, which is determined by the type and amount of karmas you will do according to your horoscope, plus the level of awareness which is also indicated in your horoscope.

19/. For example, Jupiter endows a person with intelligence and wisdom but Saturn may give bodily

weakness, which is Prarabdha. However, Jupiter's benefic influence can make that person take steps improve his health. These steps are his Kriyaman Karmas.

20/. In this way, he has reduced the Prarabdha towards weakness and disease. In this way, he can plan his future actions or Agama Karma and reduce the negative effects of Prarabdha.

21/. Thus, negative karmas get reduced and do not reach the storehouse of Sanchita Karmas through the understanding of the Purpose of Life, through awareness of your position in the universe and through enlightened, conscious choices.

Chapter 6

Understanding the Breaking of Karmic Cycle

1/. Now that you are born you cannot escape actions i.e. your karmas. You have come here to perform karmas and to realize your role in this universe. Else you would not have been born in this world.

2/. You will continue to perform karmas till you have taken your last breath, since that last breath will also be your last karma.

3/. So, there is no need to blame your past or present karmas for your misfortunes or for your fortunes.

4/. Fortunes and misfortunes, like happiness and suffering, come in cycles. Happiness cannot be permanent nor can suffering be permanent.

5/. But you can reduce your suffering and increase your happiness.

6/. Your first step to happiness is stopping to react to events and experiences that happen either to you or to your surroundings.

7/. Your second step is not to react with a sense of doership and ego which says that you have performed this or that action.

8/. The key to happiness is to perform karmas which will reduce Sanchita Karmas without creating new ones.

9/. Even if you want to add new karmas in your storehouse of Sanchit Karma, then you must perform those actions that will lead to happiness in the future and not sorrow.

10/. But you cannot escape your Prarabdha. Prarabdha Karmas have to be performed.

11/. Now you may ask, But Actions have results, good or bad.

12/. A wise person continues to perform action but does not cling to the results of those actions.

13/. You enjoy or suffer when you cling to the results of your actions or actions of others.

14/. A wise person does not try to force the results of actions he has yet to perform. So, there is no clinging.

15/. In this way, you have destroyed the notion of doership. You are not performing any action but all the actions are performed because of your Prarabdha.

16/. Now, the new seeds of Sanchita Karmas do not get sown.

17/. In this way, you have broken the Karmic Cycle and attained freedom from bondage.

18/. This is your significant step towards Eternal Happiness.

Chapter 7

Understanding the Law of Karma

- 1/. The Law of Karma is the only force that controls and runs the universe.
- 2/. Both matter and spirit are forms of energy. This energy is governed by the Law of Karma.
- 3/. Therefore, the Law of Karma conforms to the Law of Nature or Universe.
- 4/. Since energy is neither “good” nor “bad”, in the same way, the Law of Karma cannot recognize “good” or “bad” actions.
- 5/. Karma is the Chief Accountant of the Universe and not the judge. So, it only records the actions of all the matter of the universe.
- 6/. Under the Law of Karma, when we perform action, there is a transfer of energy.
- 7/. When you are physically helping another person, like helping a blind man cross the street, you are transferring some of your stored energy to that person so that he is able to perform action.

8/. Under the Law of Karma, there is a transfer of karmic energy during re-birth in this cycle of living and rebirth.

9/. Under the Law of Karma, you are born with a Karmic Bank Account.

10/. As you progress in life, this Karmic Bank Account grows and shrinks. Some of it you transfer to your children when they are born.

11/. When you are kind to another person, you transfer your energy to him. When you are not kind to another person, you take some of his energy.

12/. Even an indirect action, like taking part in a social group, etc., there is a flow of karmic energy: a withdrawal from or deposit in the Karmic Bank Account.

13/. Human emotions are manifestations of energy. Under the Law of Karma, when you make another person laugh, you are depositing in your Karmic Bank Account and withdrawing from that person.

14/. Under the Law of Karma, money is reward for the Karmic Energy that you have spent by undertaking an action.

15/. Under the Law of Karma, the job that you do is a Karmic Energy Transaction between the action undertaken for your company/business and the benefit received.

16/. Under the Law of Karma, we are all connected, whether we like it or not.

17/. So, every action we take, every decision we make, and every thought we entertain, affects all of us, now and in the future.

18/. The Karmic Chief Accountant does not judge, it also does not take sides and it does not give opinion, but it only records the transactions that take place.

19/. You are here because of the Law of Karma as a dense form of energy. So, you must perform actions without worrying about the fruits of actions, as the Bhagwad Gita says.

Chapter 8

Understanding Will Power or Ichcha Shakti

1/. There are five Powers or Shaktis: i) chit or awareness, ii) ananda or bliss, iii) ichcha or will power, iv) jyana or knowing and v) kriya or action.

2/. The most powerful of all the above shaktis is Ichcha Shakti or the will power because it can alter your destiny.

3/. It is because of your Ichcha Shakti that you are alive, that you choose from alternative positive actions; and that your action is knowingly intended by you.

4/. Understand that there is no such thing as acting against your own will.

5/. All the actions that you perform you are actually aware of those actions and that you have chosen them knowingly and intentionally.

6/. A decision not to act is also a choice that you make with your Ichcha Shakti.

7/. Not to act means restraint or the power of non-action, i.e. restraining from action.

8/. This is the highest form of action since it is the most difficult of all actions signifying unity of action and non-

action and leading to blocking aggression and wrongdoing from taking place.

9/. Restraint makes you aware of the means that you have been asked to opt from.

10/. If you take care of the means, the end will take care of itself.

11/. The means or the way that you opt to take, decides the kind of results that will follow.

12/. Unethical ways lead to tainted results while ethical ways lead to happiness.

13/. However, know that you only have freedom to perform action, the results been decided by your Prarabdha.

14/. Using Ichcha Shakti or even restraint is actually your desire in Kriyaman Karma which is shaping your storehouse of Sanchita Karma, and therefore, your future.

15/. Desire or Ichcha Shakti can change your Prarabdha which can transform your destiny both in the current life and in the next rebirth.

16/. This can be obtained by practicing control of mind or the thought processes so that you become aware of all your actions, even before you move to perform them.

Chapter 9

Understanding How to Control the Mind

1/. There are 16 desires of the mind. These are:

i) Food, ii) Physical Activity, iii) Savings, iv) Status, v) Family, vi) Society,

vii) Administration/ System, viii) Love, ix) Retaliation, x) Justice, xi) Freedom,

xii) Acceptance, xiii) Blessings, xiv) Curiosity, xv) Power, and xvi) Peace.

2/. Then there are 16 habits of the mind. These are:

i) Persistence, ii) Flexibility, iii) Listening, iv) Reacting, v) Self-referral, vi) Perfection, vii) Problem-solving, viii) Application, ix) Communication, x) Connectedness xi) Data Collection, xii) Responsible Risks, xiii) Laughter, xiv) Creativity, xv) Inspiration, and

xvi) Learning.

3/. While the desires of the mind are part of the universal process, the habits of the mind work mainly at the individual level.

4/. By understanding and realizing how the mind works at both these levels, you can control the mind and make it work according to your conscious desires.

5/. First you must work on the desires of the mind. This means attainment of peace through living in the society and being part of the system. Having decided on the means and ends of the desires of the mind, you must work on the habits of the mind.

6/. The desires of the mind are easily controlled since they are happening outside your mind, but the habits of the mind are the most difficult since they are happening inside your mind.

7/. A fish cannot know the ocean in which it is living.

8/. The habits of the mind can tell you the powers and the talents that you have, your behaviour and characteristics that make you special and different from others. These are also 16 ways that human display their intelligence. Choose from the list what you display.

9/. Habits of the mind display the value that you attach to the world, your inclination, sensitivity, capability and above all your commitment.

10/. Once you know what description fits you, both physically and mentally, you can deal with your mind.

11/. Your mind is nothing but a cluster of thoughts. These thoughts keep on arising and subsiding.

13/. A weak mind gets swayed away by the intensity of thoughts but a strong mind knows that these are mere thoughts and not reality.

14/. A weak mind can easily control your behaviour and reaction and other physical activities, but a strong mind will be under YOUR control.

15/. Stronger minds can easily control a weak mind and order it to do their tasks, however wrong they are, but a strong mind will know that another strong mind is trying to control.

16/. This is the difference between the wrong use of the mind and the right use of the mind.

17/. Psychological problems arise from the wrong use of the mind, leading unconscious living and several diseases, including mental as well as physical, besides leading to sufferings.

18/. Happiness and satisfaction arise from the right use of the mind, leading to problem-solving and conscious living.

19/. Conscious living means living with awareness and without judgement, knowing the tricks that the mind can play with YOU. Unconscious living means living as a slave of the mind, falling a victim to desires and distractions, always getting swayed by the external world.

20/. Controlling this restless mind should be done by meditation, mantra japa, wearing gemstones, application of vastu principles and the company of wise and spiritual people and food.

21/. A world of external objects cannot be avoided but self-analysis and introspection are the perfect means to control the mind.

Chapter 10

Understanding How to Control the Mind, Part II

1/. Some describe mind as something in which thoughts arise, though mind is much more than that. It is also part of the Prarabdha with which you were born. Remember that every moment of your life is intimately linked with your thoughts.

2/. The ascent or descent in the life of a human being depends largely upon his thoughts.

3/. The physical body of a person emits an aura depending upon the trigunas of his personality, i.e., sattvic, rajasic and tamasic. A person with elevated levels of inner self and prana (sattvic) displays an aura of vital energy while a person full of negative thinking and depleted prana (tamasic) displays a darkened aura.

4/. A controlled and aware mind is like an obedient giant of infinite powers.

5/. Some say that a strong physical body makes one strong. But what is seen with the eyes is not the actual strength. A human being's main strength is his mental power. A man with a strong mind and weak body can easily control a person with a strong physical body and a weak mind.

6/. While the physical body has limitations, the subtle body or the mind has no limitations.

Thus, the subtle body is more powerful than the gross body.

7/. Thoughts alone cannot bring success. One has to first think and plan about the work before starting, and then execute it with the conscious and awakened mind.

8/. Even thinking about thoughts cannot bring success. Actions resulting from superior and pure thoughts, backed by mental strength, can, however, bring success.

9/. Success comes only if you climb the ladder, step by step. You will fall down if you jump to the top of the ladder.

10/. Therefore, take simple steps towards the highest goal, with complete faith, concentration and conviction. Then, no power of earth can prevent you from reaching your highest goal.

11/. A hotch-potch mental state will not bring any success. But a mind, which like a convex lens that collects and focuses the sunrays to a single point, can give the right kind of direction and energy for success.

12/. A restless mind which is not in your control has many desires, sometimes at loggerheads with each other. None of the plans made by a restless mind, which jumps like a monkey from one desire to another, can bring steadiness and success.

13/. Now let me have a house, now let me have a car, now let me have a wife, now let me have a job, now let me travel, now let me eat this food – all these desires cannot be fulfilled

simultaneously. You must decide what you want first and what you want afterwards and then move ahead in life.

14/. If the mind is reined in and is allowed to fulfill your desires, one by one, then all the difficulties in attaining success will vanish.

15/. But this is difficult to do since the mind will always opt for what it likes rather than follow your desires. To make your mind follow your dictates, you must develop the following: faith, confidence, determination, perseverance and capacity to withstand difficulties or what may appear as failures.

16/. Your mind will be your friend as well as your follower if you give up disappointment, worries, restlessness, irreverence, jealousy, resentment and short-temper.

17/. Remember, mind is the most powerful part of your whole being, but YOU are much more powerful than the mind.

18/. You cannot achieve your goals, whether they are material or spiritual, without control of the mind. But you can make your life successful, happy and healthy once your mind is under your control.

19/. The only way to bring your mind under your control is to watch your thoughts and become aware of them, rather than getting swayed by their strength and power.

20/. This can be achieved through proper balance of
mansha-vachha-karmana, i.e, Intention-Speech-Action.

Chapter 11

Understanding Manasa-Vachcha-Karmana

1/. Karmas are performed at three levels. These are the mind level or Manasa, the speaking level or Vachcha and the doership level or Karmana.

2/. These get activated by the three gunas or tendencies that are present in every single particle in creation and their variations result in the variety that you see around you, including matter, body and spirit.

3/. These gunas are Sattva, Tamas and Rajas that categorise your behaviour. All living beings are bound to nature through these gunas and they exist in all beings in various degrees of concentration and combination. Their strengths determine your nature, behaviour and attitude in this world.

4/. These gunas create human beings who are either of one or a combination of these type: i) divine, ii) demonic, iii) animal, and iv) human. One must strive to reach the divine state from the human state one is born in and shun the demonic and the animal state whenever they become powerful.

5/. Understanding the nature of these gunas can free us from bondage and suffering. This means that cultivation of sattva guna alone is not an end in itself. One must overcome both the gunas as well as ignorance to achieve clarity of thought and purity of mind that will lead us to happiness and knowledge.

6/. Character, Knowledge and Conduct are the essential values by which a human being can reach a divine state in his lifetime, i.e., from the lowest to the highest form.

7/. These values can be inculcated by following the dharma or righteousness or law of nature, which is the basis of everything that exists in this creation.

8/. One has to follow the five types of dharma which are as follows: i) Individual Dharma, ii) Dharma towards Family, iii) Dharma towards Society, iv) Dharma towards Nation, and v) Dharma towards Prakriti or Nature or Environment. All these are inter-linked and interdependent in such a way that following one dharma will qualify to follow other dharmas.

9/. These dharmas can be following only by mastering the following: i) senses, ii) mind and iii) body.

10/. Any deficiency in any of these three states mentioned above can result in disharmony. On the other hand, a perfect harmony among these three states can definitely lead to eternal happiness.

11/. To establish perfect harmony, the following 12 principles that constitute Dharma must be strictly followed. Any violation can lead to disruption in society. These are: i) Truth, ii) Non-violence, iii) Self-control, iv) Forgiveness, v) Pleasant Speech, vi) Good behaviour, vii) Contentment, viii) Respect for Elders, ix) Compassion for the downtrodden, x) Sense of Hospitality, xi) Enterprise, and xii) Sacrifice.

12/. Observation of the above 12 principles makes your character.

13/. Your character is made by the habits that you form, which are formed by the actions that you perform. Actions arise from the words that you think.

14/. In other words, your thoughts, i.e. your intentions make your mind, which in turn gets transformed into actions or deeds, which are decided by your Prarabdha. Prarabdha designs your Kundalini (life force) which gets reflected in your Kundli or horoscope. Kundali forms your personality which is an electro-chemico-bio system.

15/. The healthier this system, the stronger will be your mind, the greater will be your confidence and the healthier will be your physical body.

16/. When these qualities become stronger, you begin to live in better surroundings, which greatly influence your success or failure.

17/. In order to achieve all of the above, you must exercise the 3-step process of Observation, Filtration and Surrender.

18/. Observation means keeping a watch on your thoughts, actions and reactions. Filtration means applying your Vivek or intelligence and deciding what you must keep and what you must throw away. Surrender means living in a state of non-judgement so that you are able to release all the

thoughts, emotions, feelings and memories that bring sorrow and suffering.

19/. But above all, you must not let your Ego come in the way of your progress.

20/. Remember, it is your choice to remain in suffering and it is your own responsibility to achieve eternal happiness.

